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STARS AND STRIPES.®

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Volume 77, No. 256 ©SS 2019

FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2019

平成31年4月5日 第三種郵便物認可 日刊(土日除く)
発行所 星条旗新聞社 〒106-0032 東京都港区六本木7丁目23番17号 定価 ¥100

\$1.00

Spring storm batters Midwest

Snow blocks a walk signal after initial snowfall and before a blizzard warning went into effect for southeast Wyoming on Wednesday in Cheyenne. The second "bomb cyclone" to hit the Midwest in a month is expected to have a similar devastating impact.

JACOB BYR,
THE WYOMING
TRIBUNE EAGLE/AP



Another 'bomb cyclone' makes travel dangerous

By BLAKE NICHOLSON
Associated Press

A storm system known as a "bomb cyclone" slowly churned through the U.S. interior Thursday for the second time in a month, unleashing a blizzard in parts of the Midwest while creating hazardous fire conditions farther south.

As much as 18 inches of snow fell in South Dakota, where Gov. Kristi Noem has closed state offices in much of the state for a second day as heavy snow and strong winds made travel conditions dangerous.

SEE TRAVEL ON PAGE 6

Lightning strikes runway of already damaged base

By ROSE L. THAYER
Stars and Stripes

AUSTIN, Texas — Lightning strikes during a severe storm Wednesday night damaged the runway at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska, where extreme weather has kept officials on the defensive in recent weeks.

Still in the early stages of recovery from mid-March flooding, base engineers spent Thursday morning repairing nearly a dozen 3- to 5-inch gashes in the runway caused by lightning strikes,

SEE BASE ON PAGE 6



Guardsmen in remote locales challenged by new fitness test

By J.P. LAWRENCE
Stars and Stripes

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — Lt. Col. Kristen Auge hunched her back and clenched her eyes shut as she began to deadlift, but the weight refused to leave the green turf.

Around her, a group of deployed Minnesota National Guardsmen from her battalion hefted, dragged and tossed weights in their first crack at the new Army Combat Fitness Test.

Auge, an avid runner, had aced her fitness tests throughout her 29-year career. Now the commander of the 34th Infantry Division's headquarters battalion was failing several exercises in the Army's new fitness assessment.

SEE TEST ON PAGE 4

Cpl. Tim Eichers hurls a rubber ball backward during a test run of the new Army fitness test at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, on March 23.

BILL BOEKER
Courtesy of the U.S. Army National Guard

PACIFIC

Fitzgerald officers will get censure letters

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Navy will drop charges against two former USS Fitzgerald officers accused of criminal negligence in the 2017 fatal collision of the ship that killed seven sailors, according to a Navy statement Thursday.

Former Fitzgerald commanding officer Cmdr. Bryce Benson and the destroyer's former tactical action officer, Lt. Natalie Combs, will instead receive secretarial letters of censure from Navy Secretary Richard Spencer. The two were previously dismissed from their jobs and received nonjudicial punishment, the Navy said.

Censure letters are public rebukes that draw shame and acknowledge wrongdoing but do not carry legal implications or affect retirement benefits or pay for officers reprimanded. However, they are often career-ending in terms of promotion, particularly at higher ranks.

"This decision is in the best interest of the Navy, the families of the Fitzgerald Sailors, and the procedural rights of the accused officers," the Navy said in the

statement.

On June 17, 2017, the Fitzgerald collided with a commercial vessel, the Philippine-flagged ACX Crystal, in the waters off Japan's coast about 80 nautical miles southwest of Tokyo. Seven sailors died, and the ship sustained millions of dollars in damages. It remains under repair in Pascagoula, Miss.

Post-collision reports pointed to a culture of negligence, crew exhaustion and a lack of training and communication as factors in the collision.

In a letter to one of the fallen sailors' families, Navy officials wrote that "the cases are being dismissed for legal reasons that impede the continued prosecution of either officer," according to a Thursday report by the Navy Times.

In January, a military judge disqualified Navy Adm. Frank Caldwell from being the convening authority in Benson's case because he "abdicated his neutral role in favor of a prosecutorial role" and made prejudicial statements, according to court documents.

That shrank the pool of naval officers eligible to pursue charges against Benson to the Navy's top two — the chief of naval operations and vice chief of naval operations.

Legal expert and retired Navy Capt. Lawrence B. Brennan told Stars and Stripes at the time that the ruling made it "highly improbable" that the case would move forward.

"[Caldwell] got out of his role as a judicial officer and joined ... the public affairs position," Brennan said. "He didn't remember his



The USS Fitzgerald is seen in dry dock at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, in July 2017.
Tyler Hlavac
Stars and Stripes

duty as convening authority, his quasi-judicial responsibility."

Benson was charged with two counts of dereliction of duty through neglect and improper hazarding a vessel through negligence. He was earlier charged also with negligent homicide, but the charge was dropped last year.

Benson was accused of failing to ensure the ship's safe navigation and "approve an adequate watch bill," "revise standing orders to account for degraded equipment" and to "adequately train and inspect the conduct of members

under his command ..." according to court documents.

Combs was charged with negligent dereliction of duty resulting in death and negligent hazarding of a vessel in the collision. She was accused of failing to "communicate with the bridge vital contact information and safe speed and maneuver recommendations, enforce watch-standing principles in the combat information center and support the officer of the deck," according to court documents.

Combs and Benson were two of four Fitzgerald officers charged

with crimes in connection with the collision. Last May, former officer-of-the-deck Lt. j.g. Sarah Coppel pleaded guilty to dereliction of duty, was sentenced to forfeit half of her pay for three months and received a letter of reprimand.

"Not a day goes by where I haven't thought about what I could have done differently," Coppel said at her court-martial. "There is nothing I can do now but take responsibility."

Last month, a Navy board of inquiry found no reason to remove Lt. Brian Woodley from the service after he was accused of failing in his duties in the collision. Woodley had faced charges of dereliction in the performance of duties through neglect resulting in death, negligent hazarding of a vessel and negligent homicide. A military court ruled there was not enough evidence to take the case to trial.

Combs and Benson maintained their innocence throughout the prosecution process.

After the Fitzgerald collision and the unrelated collision of the USS John S. McCain two months later that killed 10 sailors, the Navy ordered internal and independent reviews of factors contributing to the tragedies.

The reports identified 117 recommendations — later reduced to 103 — to address years of underfunded operations, an increased pace of operations, and an erosion of safety standards that led to the collisions, according to the reports. In a Feb. 25 memorandum, the Navy said the service has implemented 91 of the changes.

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Clarification

A photo caption in Thursday's edition should have said that Sevastopol is a city in Crimea, which the U.S. recognizes as part of Ukraine. It was forcibly annexed by Russia in 2014.

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MILITARY

Guidance on TV channels is clarified by AAFES

Stars and Stripes

The Army and Air Force Exchange Service dropped a reference to news channels being politically divisive in a second memo recommending that its retail facilities show mainly sports programming on TVs in common areas.

The new memo was sent two days after the first to clarify that AAFES' call for televisions in its retail facilities to be tuned to sports programming was a recommendation, not a policy, according to the agency.

The previous version said AAFES had "elected to play sports channels/sports programming on all common area TVs" when its own informational service isn't being shown.

"As a federal entity, we remain neutral on political issues. News channels should not be shown on common area TVs due to their divisive political nature," it added.

The new memo, which a Dallas-based spokesman said was being sent to stores late Wednesday, drops the wording about news channels and politics without explanation.

"The Exchange recommends sports channels/sports programming on all common area TVs when an Exchange channel is not being shown," it said. "This guidance allows flexibility to make adjustments based on the 'news of the day' and local needs."

The spokesman, Chris Ward, said in an email that the updated memo was "an effort to provide better clarity for the stores regarding the fact that this was just guidance and not a policy."

The updated policy memo appeared after Stars and Stripes inquired Wednesday.



THERON GOODRUE/Stars and Stripes

A patron dines at the Army and Air Force Exchange Service food court at Yokota Air Base, Japan, on Wednesday. AAFES has issued a new memo clarifying its recommendation on TV programming shown in common areas.

day about AAFES discouraging news programming in its common areas.

TVs mounted on walls in food courts, customer service centers and other areas on bases around the world frequently show a loop of news channels including Fox, CNN and MSNBC.

AAFES operates nearly 2,700 facilities that provide goods and services to U.S. military personnel and their families worldwide.

Lack of disaster aid for bases unresolved

By CAITLIN M. KENNEY

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A House lawmaker voiced his alarm and displeasure Wednesday with the failure of Congress to deliver more funds to help the military with disaster recovery, several months after hurricanes devastated a Marine Corps base and an Air Force base.

"I'm a little taken aback with what's happened at Camp Lejeune and with the (Marine) Corps. And the damage and the need that you have for a supplemental appropriations bill," Rep. Austin Scott, R-Ga., told a panel of Navy and Marine Corps leaders during a budget hearing of the House Armed Services Committee.

Last week, the Marine Corps received \$400 million in reprogrammed funds to address the immediate needs at Camp Lejeune, N.C., after Hurricane Florence caused widespread damage to the base in September.

The Air Force also received authorization to reprogram \$200 million in funds to help Tyndall Air Force Base on the Florida Panhandle, which was devastated by Hurricane Michael in October.

Scott raised concerns about the Air Force's available funding to rebuild Tyndall. Without supplemental disaster assistance, the base might have to stop flights there.

Even with the reprogrammed money, it will cost \$3.1 billion during the next three to four years to fix Camp Lejeune "so that we don't have to go through this again," Gen. Robert Neller, commandant of the Marine Corps, said at the hearing.

Scott said the district that he represents in Georgia was also affected last year by

Hurricane Michael and it also has not received relief, forcing farmers to file for "bankruptcy even though they were promised disaster assistance. It hasn't come."

"You guys need it just like we do," he told Navy and Marines officials at the hearing.

Since Hurricane Florence hit Camp Lejeune in September, about 50% of the homes on the base have been repaired, Neller said. They also have identified 31 buildings on base that will cost more to repair than they are worth, so they will have to be rebuilt.

Neller agreed Wednesday that the base would continue to worsen without supplemental disaster funding.

"Otherwise, we're going to have to figure out how we're going to self-fund this," he said. "We don't have insurance, the Congress is our insurance."

Congress will leave for a two-week recess, Scott said, "and I'm embarrassed, quite honestly, that this job hasn't been done," referring to approval for disaster assistance funding.

Scott implored Navy Secretary Richard Spencer, as well as the other service secretaries, to speak directly to the White House "about the damage that's going to be done," if supplemental disaster funding is not passed before the congressional recess.

"I do not think President [Donald] Trump would be allowing Congress to go home for two weeks if he knew what was about to happen to the readiness of the Air Force and the [Marine] Corps," Scott said. "I think that he would be challenging us ... to stay here and get this job done."

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Osan gate renovations to boost security will begin Friday

By MATT KEELER

Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — Years of planning has paid off for the 51st Civil Engineer Squadron, which designed and advocated for funding the complete overhaul of the installation's main gate that begins Friday.

The two-year project by Korean contractors will bring the main access control point, constructed over three decades ago, up to standards for anti-terrorism force protection implemented after 9/11.

"The way it is set up now is not just hitting the mark," said Lt. Col. Timothy Fryar, commander of the 51st Civil Engineers. "The gate is too close to the perimeter, so our defenders don't have enough time to determine if someone is trying to run the gate or not."

An ideal control point setup consists of serpentine entry roads that force drivers to slow down to an acceptable speed, and a deployable barrier system that prevents potential threats from reaching the base perimeter.

The current control point puts visitors inside the perimeter before they are screened by security forces. Should the driver attempt to bypass the control point, a manned, up-armored Humvee is signaled to block access and quickly increase the security response.



MATT KEELER/Stars and Stripes

Security forces conduct official duties at the main gate at Osan Air Base, South Korea, soon to undergo a substantial renovation, on Thursday.

"Coming on base, for security forces to be able to defend us, there is just no time," Fryar said. "Once a defender determines someone is attempting to run the gate, they are on the installation already."

Less than 100 yards beyond the gate is the new Osan Elementary School, where hundreds of children and educators spend their days, and a possible point of interest

in the event a gate runner makes it beyond current security measures.

At a price tag of nearly \$11.3 million, the new access control point will provide the protection essential to roughly 11,000 service members, families and civilians that work and live on base, Fryar said.

The new gate will include serpentine roads, guard towers, a deployable barrier

system, three lanes of inbound traffic, two lanes for outbound, a visitors' center, a separate vehicle inspection area and a new pedestrian entrance more than twice the size of the current facility.

The renovation is going to eliminate substantial parking on the north and south sides of the current layout.

"We already have a big enough parking issue on this base as it is," said Hope Bors-ette, a military spouse living in Osan base housing. "Taking out more parking isn't helping the situation."

Base residents typically drive to the main gate, park at those lots and walk to the shopping district just outside the gate.

Fryar said a possible solution lies in an approved phone app for the 51st Logistics Readiness Squadron shuttle bus system. The app, still in early development, is intended to show users where the installation shuttle buses are located in real time, making travel more convenient.

The construction is broken down into three phases. During phases one and two, the first 17 months, the gate will retain normal operations allowing both vehicles and pedestrians to enter.

During the last seven months, phase three will allow only pedestrians to enter the installation. Morin Gate has been recommended as an alternative.

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MILITARY

THAAD anti-missile system to deploy to Romania soon

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The U.S. will deploy an advanced anti-missile system to Romania this summer to support NATO efforts in Europe, the military said Thursday.

The deployment came at the request of NATO and is needed while maintenance is done on the Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System in Romania, U.S. European Command said.

The Army will temporarily deploy its Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system, which will

integrate into NATO's ballistic missile defense architecture.

The THAAD unit, which comes from the Fort Hood, Texas-based 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, will operate at Naval Support Facility Deveselu. Once it is in place, NATO's Allied Air Command will assume operational control of the unit, EUCOM said. "This site provides a defensive capability to deter future conflicts, and to defend ourselves and our NATO allies, should deterrence fail," EUCOM said.

U.S. missile defense efforts in Europe, which include Navy ships based in Spain and another

ground-based site in Poland, are focused on countering threats by rogue nations like Iran.

U.S. officials say the system is not designed to counter Russia, but Moscow has complained about the basing of U.S. systems in Europe that it says pose a threat.

The scheduled update to Aegis Ashore Romania is part of regular planned maintenance taking place on all U.S. Aegis systems, EUCOM said. The update will not add any offensive capabilities to the Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System, the command said.

"THAAD will remain op-



BRANDON BANZHAF/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Soldiers with the 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade look at a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense weapon system at Fort Hood, Texas. The unit will send a THAAD system to Romania this summer.

erational in Romania only while Aegis Ashore maintenance and updates are taking place during

the summer," EUCOM said.

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Test: Army says ACFT provides a better measure of how GIs will perform in combat

FROM FRONT PAGE

"We're going to have to train them up to be better," Augie, 51, said after the test, "and that includes me."

The ACFT will require some soldiers to learn new movements, and some soldiers in Kuwait shared their concerns about how training for specialized exercises like the deadlift — which can cause serious injuries if done with poor form — may hold special challenges for National Guardsmen.

For the old test, training simply required time and a bit of space to run and do pushups and situps. But the new assessment requires a training space with heavy plates for the deadlifts and a pull-up rack for the leg tucks.

In Minnesota, not everyone has access to a sufficient gym, or lives close to an armory, and those in remote areas may have to train alone, said 1st Sgt. Chris Swoboda, who helped set up the test. Swoboda, 43, said this was a chance to learn if soldiers were ready to take the ACFT and whether his unit was ready to administer it.

By fall 2020, the ACFT will be an Army-wide requirement. The evaluation includes the deadlift, standing power throw, hand-release pushups, the "sprint, drag, carry," leg tucks and a 2-mile run.

The deployed soldiers had trained for two months for this nonrecord, voluntary first look at the new assessment under the supervision of a newly certified



J.P. LAWRENCE/Stars and Stripes

Army Spc. Arnel Joakim crunches his legs upward as part of the new Army fitness test, conducted as a test run during deployment to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, last month.

ACFT trainer.

Even on active duty, the unit was unable to find all the new gear required to train and take the test. Soldiers said they had to scrounge for equipment from other units in Kuwait.

The Army is working with the National Guard to provide equipment, said Michael McGurk, the director of research and analysis for the Center for Initial Military Training, which is responsible for the new standards. Those without equipment, such as kettlebells, for example, can substitute jugs of water, McGurk said.

Soldiers were confident the training they had received from

their sergeants had showed them how to do the new exercises.

Spc. Arnel Joakim, 38, said he looked forward to the ACFT, as the burly mechanic had struggled with the old test's body-weight exercises and the 2-mile run.

"The old one, you don't have the opportunity to use your power," said Joakim, who belongs to the 34th Infantry Division's Headquarters Support Company.

Another soldier, public affairs specialist Sgt. Linsey Williams, vowed peers with her ease at deadlifting, hustle on the "sprint, drag, carry" and performance on the leg tucks.

Spc. Tanjela Starr seemed

more unsure about the new exercises. "I don't know why we think this will be better," Starr, 27, said. "It seems intense."

Finding her deadlift form proved difficult for Starr, a supply specialist in Bravo Company in the 34th's headquarters battalion. With the bar on the ground and with no weights, an instructor tried to teach Starr to keep her hips low during the deadlift to avoid injury. But Starr kept her hips up and instead collapsed her shoulders toward the ground.

"They kept stopping me," Starr said. "They said the biggest thing was my form, that I wasn't able to sit my butt down all the way."

Among National Guardsmen, the new test will require units to anticipate possible injuries for soldiers training on their own, said Lt. Col. Sean O'Mara, division surgeon for the 34th Division, adding that he hopes soldiers train only under the guidance of professionals.

The Army says the tests will reduce injuries by building fitter troops, and that the ACFT provides a better measure of how soldiers will perform in combat. The service spent six years developing the assessment and joins the Marines, Navy and Air Force in recently creating new fitness standards.

Troops in 63 battalions started taking the test in October in an experimental study to get suggestions on any potential adjustments. Preliminary results show the leg tucks being the most difficult for soldiers, Army officials

said, with soldiers also reporting times in the 2-mile run that are 30 to 60 seconds slower than in the old test.

At Camp Arifjan, the test's end led to rosy reviews by soldiers like Joakim and Sgt. Jade Dueffert, training sergeant for the 34th's headquarters support company.

"This is a better measure of total fitness, for the whole body," Dueffert said.

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WWII bomb leads to evacuations near Wiesbaden base housing

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — A World War II-era bomb discovered near an Army housing area in Wiesbaden has prompted local evacuations, but base facilities are not affected, the military said Thursday.

Residents living off post in the evacuation zone, however, were required to leave their homes Thursday by 1 p.m., the Army said.

The ordinance was discovered in Bierstadt, east of the Aukamm Housing Area, garrison officials

in Wiesbaden said in a statement. The device was scheduled to be defused at 7 p.m. by German authorities.

The Aukamm Housing Area itself is not in the evacuation zone.

In Germany, evacuations related to unearthed World War II

bombs occur frequently.

The bomb found in Wiesbaden weighs about 550 pounds, city officials said. The evacuation area extends in a radius of about 2,000 feet. Residents also can take shelter at the Theodor-Fliedner school on 15 Biegerstrasse.

MILITARY

Space Force faces senators' skepticism

By CLAUDIA GRISALES
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A Senate panel on Thursday raised a long list of reservations over a Trump administration plan to create Space Force as a new military branch that could require \$500 billion in annual funding.

In their first hearing on the proposal, Senate Armed Services Committee members met top Pentagon officials with skepticism and concerns that a Space Force will result in a new, costly layer of military bureaucracy.

Some Senate committee members suggested a unified command rather than a separate military branch could be a better way to improve national space security.

"I don't understand how putting a new box in an organizational chart is going to help us to respond to the new challenge that we face," Sen. Angus King, I-Maine, told top military officials. "I think Space Command makes sense ... but to create a new bureaucracy that is going to cost us half-a-billion dollars a year, I've got to be convinced that there's going to be some incremental value there."

However, acting Defense Secretary Pat Shanahan; outgoing Air Force Secretary Heather Wilson; Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Air Force Gen. John Hyten, commander of U.S. Strategic Command, told committee

members that the new service was the best approach to U.S. security in space.

"We are all open-minded on the plan but are wrestling with different aspects of it," said Sen. Jim Inhofe, R-Okla., chairman of Senate Armed Services Committee. "This is one of those rare times where we are having a hearing where people haven't made up their minds."

Rhode Island Sen. Jack Reed, the committee's ranking Democrat, said Congress hasn't created a new military branch in 70 years and it's a decision that should not be taken lightly.

Among Reed's concerns, Space Force would see the military's highest ratio of headquarters personnel to its overall servicemember population. For example, the Air Force has an estimated 320,000 airmen to its 2,300 headquarters personnel, while the Space Force ratio would be 16,500 to 1,000, he said.

"How do we avoid that and why didn't we think harder about coming with a leaner structure?" Reed asked.

Committee members also expressed concerns that a Space Force will drain the Air Force and that its culture is too similar. They also shared reservations about a four-star general overseeing the new service and competing with the needs of the Air Force.

"I am airmen at heart. When I bleed, I bleed blue. I love my Air



CARLOS BONGIOANNI/Stars and Stripes

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford, center, and acting Secretary of Defense Pat Shanahan, left, talk with Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., Thursday on Capitol Hill.

Force and I love the history of the Air Force and space," Hyten told the Senate committee. "But every physical domain we have, when it becomes contested, we create a military service to deal with that. So, we're going to have a Space Force one day. I think what the committee has to decide is when that is going to happen."

In 2017, a House proposal to create a "Space Corps" as a sub-unified command was met with fervent opposition from the Pentagon's then-leadership and their Senate colleagues. However, President Donald Trump then upheld the proposal last March, suggesting the military should create a new branch instead called Space

Force as a result, giving the move new momentum.

"I appreciate the president putting this idea forward. You can tell that we're all wrestling with it; we're struggling with it," Sen. Dan Sullivan, R-Alaska, told the military officials. "It's pretty clear that watching some of your evolutions, that you've struggled with it as well."

For example, Wilson, who leaves her Air Force job next month to become the next president of the University of Texas at El Paso, was vocal about her opposition before reversing her stance last year.

Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., quoted Wilson saying in 2017

after a Senate hearing that the Pentagon was already complicated enough without a space command, it would just add a new organizational box and new funds should be spent on lethality, not bureaucracy. Peters said money can't continue to be thrown away on such military initiatives, and he'd rather see Pentagon officials offer plans to spend more efficiently.

Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., also expressed confusion over the move even after previous conversations with Shanahan on the reasoning for a Space Force.

"I'm having a real hard time understanding why we need this other agency," Manchin said. "You've got everything at your disposal right now ... this doesn't make any sense to me at all."

However, Wilson, Shanahan, Dunford and Hyten remained steadfast in their support of the president's plan for a new service.

"The amount of change that is taking place in this environment, we're not prepared to address ... the way we are set up now," Shanahan told Manchin. "This is a fundamental shift to how we treat space as a domain, so the culture has changed because the mission has changed, the leadership will change, the prioritization of the resources will change and then our approach to developing capability will change."

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Air Force offers incentives for officers to recruit, teach

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Air Force wants some of its best officers to spend time recruiting or instructing future officers in ROTC and entrance training, and it is offering incentives to make such duties more attractive, service officials announced Thursday.

The Air Force secretary will instruct promotion boards to heavily weight officers' experience in those duties away from their normal career assignments when they consider them for promotions, Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, the service's personnel chief, told reporters at the Pentagon last week. That new instruction will officially take effect next year.

"We're trying to make sure that we as an Air Force are truly valuing the need and the emphasis on that baseline foundational instruction and recruiting [which is] really important to us in developing the Air Force that we need," Kelly said. "We want the Air Force ... to value those duties and understand the contribution those officers are performing."

"The contribution is large. It's the key foundation for what we do

as an Air Force."

Other incentives include deployment exemptions and assignments as short as two years when possible, the ability to enter a preference to serve at one's alma mater when possible for officers selected for ROTC instruction, and preference for their next assignments, the Air Force said.

Kelly said the most talented officers in the Air Force have not been attracted to serving in recruiting or instruction in recent years because it was seen as potentially detrimental to their careers. The general said it means future Air Force officers are not being taught by the best the service has to offer.

The Air Force will soon ask commanders to identify top officers and nominate them to serve in recruiting and instruction assignments. Officers interested in applying should update their preferences in the Air Force's online personnel program, MyVEC-TOR, starting Monday until May 24. To be considered, officers must be endorsed by their commanders or senior raters, according to the Air Force.

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ACCOMPLISH WHAT OTHERS CAN'T

U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS

MILITARY

Moran picked to be chief of naval operations

By CATLIN M. KENNEY
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON—Adm. Bill Moran has been nominated by President Donald Trump to become the next chief of naval operations, the Navy's most senior officer, the service announced Thursday.

Moran would become the 32nd chief of naval operations if confirmed by the Senate. He has been the vice chief of naval operations since May 2016.

As the Navy's top admiral, he is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and reports to the secretary of the Navy.

"[Moran] has been central to the Navy's upcoming a fighting stance in this great power competition," Adm. John Richardson, who is

now chief of naval operations, said in a Navy statement. "As I turn over and go ashore, I will rest easy knowing that, pending confirmation, Adm. Moran has the watch."

Richardson is scheduled to retire in the summer after 37 years of service. He has been the chief of naval operations since September 2015.

Moran is from Newburg, N.Y., and graduated in 1981 from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., with a bachelor's degree

in naval science. He also earned a master's degree in 2006 from the National War College, located at Fort McNair in Washington.

Moran is an "extraordinary leader who has been a stalwart partner and adviser," Navy Secretary Richard Spencer said in the statement. "I look forward to working with him in the years ahead when he is confirmed."

Serving as a pilot, Moran flew P-3 Orion patrol aircraft. He previously served as commander of Patrol Squadron 46 and Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 2, according to his official biography and the Navy statement. He has also commanded the Patrol and Reconnaissance Group and was on the staffs of the chief of naval operations and the commander of

U.S. Indo-Pacific Command.

His military awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal and the Legion of Merit.

It was also announced Thursday that Vice Adm. Robert Burke was nominated by the president to become the Navy's 40th vice chief of naval operations. He is now the deputy chief of naval operations for manpower, personnel, training and education.

If confirmed, Burke will be promoted to the rank of admiral, according to the nomination notice received by the Senate on Wednesday.

A Portage, Mich. native, Burke has a bachelor's and a master's degree in electrical engineering from Western Michigan Univer-

sity in Kalamazoo, Mich., and the University of Central Florida in Orlando, Fla., according to his official biography.

He has served on attack and ballistic missile submarines, including the USS Von Steuben and the USS Bremerton, according to his biography. Burke has also commanded the USS Hampton and was the commodore of Submarine Development Squadron 12.

Burke has also served as the director of operations for U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and commander of Submarine Group 8. His military awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal and the Legion of Merit.

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Moran

Travel: Severe storm knocks out power, grounds airplanes

FROM FRONT PAGE

Without conditions were reported in northwest Kansas and western Nebraska, where the Department of Transportation closed several highways Thursday morning. Schools in Minneapolis and St. Paul were among hundreds that closed in Minnesota, where as much as 2 feet of snow is expected by Friday.

The Minnesota State Patrol said it has responded to more than 200 crashes statewide since Wednesday.

The storm knocked out power Wednesday to thousands of homes and businesses in South Dakota, disrupted air and ground travel from Colorado to Minnesota, and threatened to swell rivers in the Midwest that flooded after March's drenching.

Both storms are known as a "bomb cyclone," a weather phenomenon that entails a rapid drop in air pressure and a storm strengthening explosively, according to David Roth, a forecaster at the National Weather Service's Weather Prediction Center in Maryland.

The latest storm's impacts are likely to be similar to last month's storm, Roth said. That blast dropped heavy snow and led to massive flooding in the Midwest

that caused billions of dollars in damage in Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa and South Dakota.

"Hopefully, this time it will be a slow snowmelt," Roth said.

Particularly hard hit by the storm were eastern South Dakota and southwestern Minnesota. Winds in excess of 50 mph also were expected, creating life-threatening conditions, according to the National Weather Service.

"We're calling it historic because of the widespread heavy snow. We will set some records," said Mike Connelly, a weather service meteorologist in Aberdeen, S.D.

In Nebraska, the State Patrol was sending additional troopers into the state's panhandle, and officials closed Interstate 80 in that region.

"This storm is going to be dangerous," Patrol Maj. Russ Stanzky said.

An unusual but not rare weather phenomenon known as "thunder snow"—snow accompanied by thunder and lightning—was reported in central South Dakota.

"It's essentially a thunderstorm, but it's cold enough for snow," Connelly said.

Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts extended five weather-related executive orders until May 15 to



JACOB BYRN, THE WYOMING TRIBUNE EAGLE/AP

A dog peeks over a chain-link fence along Parsley Boulevard during a blizzard warning hitting southeast Wyoming and the Colorado Front Range on Wednesday in Cheyenne, Wyo.

help communities gain fast access to the state's emergency resources. Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz said "the National Guard stands ready" to rescue any stranded motorists.

The weather service posted an ice storm warning into Friday morning for a portion of southern Minnesota, warning that thick ice could accumulate on power lines and lead to outages.

Strong winds associated with the weather system were also creating dangerous wildfire and travel conditions in New Mexico, Texas and Oklahoma.



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI/AP

A United Airlines plane is de-iced before taking off from Denver International Airport on Wednesday.

Base: Recovery of Offutt Air Force Base will take time following severe weather

FROM FRONT PAGE

Col. Michael H. Manion, commander of 55th Wing, posted to Facebook.

In advance of the overnight storm, which produced quarter-inch-sized hail, the base on Wednesday evacuated its fleet of KC-135, a fixed-wing reconnaissance aircraft. The aircraft was scheduled to return Thursday afternoon following repairs to

the runway, said Ryan Hansen, spokesman for the 55th Wing, which oversees operations at the base.

The damaged runway was just one of many repairs underway as the southeastern Nebraska base is still assessing damage caused by flooding that began March 15 when snowmelt in areas north of the base overwhelmed the banks of the Missouri River. Home to

U.S. Strategic Command, the base sits just west of the Missouri River near the city of Bellevue. About one-third of the base sat underwater for days.

"The recovery process is going to be very long," Hansen said.

The base is now in a 90-day assessment of facilities. Once complete, they will have a better idea of how many facilities can be retrofitted, renovated or must be

demolished.

Officials are also monitoring for the potential for more flooding, Hansen said.

By Thursday morning, the risk of flooding had downgraded to barely minimal, said David Pearson, a hydrologist with the National Weather Service in the Omaha Valley.

"We see an increase in the river, but it's not going to get to

a level that will impact the base directly," he said. "However, the challenge will be getting through this wet season over the next couple months. We can get into a rainy pattern and the river is already high."

"We are in a better spot than we were," Pearson said.

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NATION

Trump seeks to dismantle federal agency

BY LISA REIN
AND DAMIAN PALETTA
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The White House is moving to do what no president has accomplished since the end of World War II: eliminate a major federal agency.

If the Trump administration succeeds at dismantling the Office of Personnel Management, the closure could be a blueprint for shuttering other departments as it tries to shrink government.

The agency would be pulled apart and its functions divided among three other departments. An executive order directing parts of the transition by the fall is in the final stages of review, administration officials said, with an announcement by President Donald Trump likely by summer. OPM employees were briefed at a meeting in March.

For Trump, the breakup of the 5,565-employee federal personnel agency would offer a job of bureaucratic defibrillation to a slow-to-change workforce that the president and his top aides have targeted as a symptom of a sluggish, inefficient government.

The experiment will be closely watched not just on Capitol Hill, but also by other agencies that could be next.

"It's a big, exemplary step," Margaret Weichert, deputy director for management at the Office of Management and Budget

and acting OPM director, said in an interview. She characterized the agency created to oversee the civil service in 1978 as "fundamentally not set up for success, structurally."

The agency is responsible for managing the civilian federal workforce; coordinating hiring, recruiting and performance policies; overseeing health insurance and retirement benefits; and ensuring that agencies adhere to laws governing employees' rights under an apolitical merit system.

For Democrats and their allies in the labor movement, the effort to abolish the agency and redistribute its functions is a power play in defiance of Congress.

"Does anyone really think that if tomorrow the president said, 'I'm dismantling [the Department of Defense], and I think Ben Carson over at HUD can handle procurement and Betsy DeVos over at Education can handle the Army,' that it would fly through?" asked Rep. Gerald Connolly, D-Va., chairman of a House Oversight Committee panel on government operations.

He has sent Weichert a lengthy request for details of the plan and is scheduling a hearing this spring "so you can make your case."

Watchers of the federal government say they cannot remember a stand-alone department of OPM's scope being dismantled since the World War II era.

The Works Progress Administration, a New Deal agency that carried out public works projects, was dissolved in 1943. Congress abolished the Community Services Administration in 1981 and folded its functions into the Department of Health and Human Services, a closure faulted by congressional auditors as poorly handled.

OPM, with a \$2.1 billion annual budget, is bigger and more multifaceted.

"We're very good at creating new entities," said John Palguta, a retired career executive with the Merit Systems Protection Board. "But we haven't abolished very much. I haven't seen this kind of wholesale dismantlement of an independent, executive branch agency."

It's not easy to wipe out a federal department, especially one that serves 2.1 million employees across the government. The White House is short on details even as it prepares to move employees out of OPM's headquarters in downtown Washington.

Officials were not able to estimate the short- or long-term savings of the closure.

The White House is attempting to dismantle the agency in several stages, with some steps beginning now and other changes delayed pending congressional approval.

By starting the process, the administration hopes to claim a win on a major government reorganization plan that has languished without buy-in from Congress.

The plan envisions a smaller, more consolidated government in line with the president's campaign promise to "cut so much your head will spin."

Wiping out the federal personnel agency could be Exhibit A as Trump's reelection campaign assembles a list of victories to take to voters, from deregulation and tax cuts to trade tariffs.

Weichert acknowledged that the administration would need Congress to approve the transfer of two of OPM's core functions, the employee retirement and health care systems, and plans to ask lawmakers to introduce legislation in coming weeks.

The White House is taking steps now to parcel out many of the other responsibilities by the fall.

The agency's massive background investigation operation will migrate first to the Defense Department. The General Services Administration, the federal real estate agency, will absorb OPM's human resources role, including training, pay and hiring, workforce planning and the inspector general's office.

The Office of Management and Budget would take over high-level policies governing federal employees, a plan that advocates and unions are decrying as a backdoor ploy to politicize the civil service by installing political appointees close to the White House.

Ribbon-cutting ceremony a last act for ousted DHS officials

By COLLEEN LONG
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Kirstjen Nielsen and other longtime civil servants stood outside the Department of Homeland Security's new headquarters Wednesday in the breezy sunshine — a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a building they'd never work in.

Nielsen, homeland security secretary for a few more hours, stood smiling next to her replacement. Both held giant gold scissors, and on a count of three, they sliced through the blue ribbon together.

If there were bad feelings or awkwardness, they weren't on display. The event felt more like a graduation than the moves orchestrated by the White House this week to axe the agency's leadership.

Nielsen, for her part, seemed relaxed as she stepped to the podium to address her employees one last time. She spoke of their accomplishments together and cracked a joke about how construction took so long she almost didn't see the new headquarters,



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Outgoing Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen, at podium, speaks alongside her outgoing acting deputy secretary, Claire Grady, at the dedication of the agency's new headquarters Wednesday in Washington.

erected at the site of an old federal psychiatric hospital.

"But I just made it," she said.

Nielsen resigned Sunday, ending a tumultuous tenure at the helm of a sprawling department of 240,000 people responsible for

border security, disaster relief, cybersecurity, counterterrorism and other missions. She finally had enough after the most recent tangle with President Donald Trump and his aides over the increase of Central American

migrants crossing the Southern border, and Trump's frustration.

The resignation was fueled partly because Trump had suddenly withdrawn the nomination of Immigration and Customs Enforcement leader Ron Villalpando without telling anyone, and wanted to shake up leadership, people familiar with the matter said. They weren't authorized to speak publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Villalpando was there Wednesday, sitting on the end of the front row of white folding chairs, shortly after sending a letter to his employees saying his last day at ICE was Friday, capping more than three decades of border work.

Nielsen was introduced at the podium by Claire Grady, acting deputy secretary and civil servant of more than 28 years. She was next in line to become secretary but had been forced to resign when Trump decided to name Kevin McAleenan, the head of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, as acting secretary. Both women got standing ova-

tions. Both were leaving after Wednesday.

McAleenan, sat on the other side of the row of folding chairs, next to Transportation Security Administration head David Peck, who was taking Grady's place. Outgoing Secret Service Director Randolph "Tex" Altes, ousted by Trump for personal reasons, sat there too.

Dozens of other employees gathered on the grass behind the folding chairs in the shadow of a stately brick building, one of the original structures of the old St. Elizabeth's facility — the first federally run psychiatric facility, where John Hinkley Jr., the man who shot President Ronald Reagan, was once held.

Nielsen, who pushed for the new headquarters, told her employees she was grateful and proud of their work. She told them to stay positive, even during tough times.

"Working at DHS is a calling," Nielsen said. "It is not for everyone. It takes courage, commitment, grit, innovation and hard work."

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NATION

Trump still prefers 'big deal' with N. Korea

DAVID NAKAMURA
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Thursday signaled he remains open to an incremental deal with North Korea that would help further the negotiations over nuclear disarmament, but he emphasized his administration remains focused on “the big deal.”

Ahead of a meeting with South Korean President Moon Jae-in in the Oval Office, Trump told reporters that “various deals could happen,” and said the two leaders would be discussing potential increases in humanitarian aid, including food assistance, to the North.

But he also emphasized he expects economic sanctions to remain in place until Pyongyang agrees to a deal to eliminate its nuclear weapons.

Asked if he would accept a “smaller deal” that fell short of that goal to keep talks going, Trump responded: “I’d have to see what the deal is. There are various smaller deals that could happen . . . You could work out step-by-step pieces, but at this moment we’re talking about the big deal. The big deal is we have to get rid of nuclear weapons.”

Trump abruptly ended his talks with Kim Jong Un during a summit in Hanoi in late February after the two sides failed to make progress, and there have been no working-level meetings since then. Trump



EVAN VUCCA/AP

President Donald Trump meets with South Korean President Moon Jae-in in the Oval Office of the White House on Thursday.

declined to say whether he has been in contact with Kim since their summit.

The president said a third summit “could happen,” but he did not offer a timeline and added that the negotiations are “not a fast process.”

“I enjoyed the summits. I enjoyed being with the Chairman,” Trump said of Kim.

“They’ve been really productive. But this is not going to go fast . . . If it goes fast, then it’s not the proper deal.”

Moon’s visit to the White House represented an urgent effort to get the talks back on track and persuade Trump to support minor sanctions relief that would open the door to small-scale, cross-border economic

projects between South Korea and North Korea.

Trump and first lady Melania Trump met Moon and his wife, Kim Jung-sook, at the South Portico, escorting them into the White House for their meetings, which were scheduled to last for less than two hours.

Trump administration officials have said privately that they have not heard back from their North Korean counterparts after sending messages that they remain open to resuming working-level meetings.

The talks in Hanoi broke down after the North offered to close parts of its main nuclear processing facility in exchange for sanctions relief, but the United States demanded that the North commit to complete and irreversible denuclearization before any sanctions are lifted.

At a Senate hearing on Wednesday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told lawmakers that he was unable to answer affirmatively whether the two sides had agreed upon a specific definition of denuclearization. Pyongyang has long insisted that the United States remove its nuclear umbrella over South Korea as part of a deal, but U.S. officials have said that is a nonstarter.

Trump said his relationship with Kim remains “strong” and noted that the North has maintained a freeze on nuclear and ballistic missile testing since November 2017.

Deadline missed to turn over Trump tax returns

BY ANDREW TAYLOR
AND JONATHAN LEIMRE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Treasury Department has missed a deadline to deliver President Donald Trump’s tax returns to the House Ways and Means Committee chairman. It’s another early step in a battle between the Trump administration and congressional Democrats over access to Trump’s business and financial dealings, with the dispute likely to end up in court.



Mnuchin

In a letter to Rep. Richard Neal, D-Mass., Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said his department hasn’t decided whether to comply with the lawmaker’s demand and will consult with the Justice Department and “carefully” review the request further. Neal asked for Trump’s returns a week ago.

“The legal implications of this request could affect protections for all Americans against politically-motivated disclosures of personal tax information, regardless of which party is in power,” Mnuchin wrote on Wednesday.

Mnuchin said the Treasury respects lawmakers’ oversight duties and would make sure tax-

payer protections would be “scrupulously observed, consistent with my statutory responsibilities” as the department reviews the request.

Neal reacted cautiously and is expected to have a fuller response later this week after consulting with House lawyers.

Other Democrats accused the administration of dragging its feet.

“How many lawyers and how much time does it take for Secretary Mnuchin to understand that ‘shall’ means ‘shall’?” Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, said in a statement that alluded to the 1924 statute that mandates the IRS provide any taxpayer’s returns when asked by a handful of top lawmakers.

Access to Trump’s returns would give Democrats information about the president’s business dealings and potential conflicts of interest.

Trump had told reporters before Mnuchin sent the letter that he “would love to give” the returns, but would not do so while he was under audit, a stand he long has taken.

The IRS says there’s no rule against subjects of an audit publicly releasing their tax filings.

Neal asked the IRS last Wednesday to turn over six years of Trump’s tax returns within a week.

Trump has broken with decades of presidential precedent by not voluntarily releasing his returns to the public.

Dem candidates embrace gun control

BY MATT VISER
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Sen. Kamala Harris, of California, held a town hall meeting at Canyon Springs High School in Nevada, the site of a fatal shooting last year. Former Texas congressman Beto O’Rourke carries a photo in his wallet of a victim of gun violence and often recounts his 8-year-old’s story of hiding in a closet during an active-shooter drill. Sen. Elizabeth Warren, of Massachusetts, has faced questions about gun control at nearly a dozen events.

The 2020 Democratic presidential candidates are embracing gun control more enthusiastically than in any other campaign in recent times, with emotional appeals against firearm violence and pledges to stand up to the National Rifle Association.

As with other issues, the change reflects the party’s accelerating shift toward voters who live in cities and suburbs and are more highly educated. It forecasts a general election battle that could test the party’s liberal surge against a deep attachment to gun culture in many parts of the country, including some areas that Democrats hope to wrest from President Donald Trump.

Perhaps for that reason, the dynamic falls short of Democrats’ endorsement of such broad, novel packages as the Green New Deal and Medicare-for-all. Instead, the candidates are signing onto a patchwork of individual measures such as an assault weapons ban, universal background checks and

“red flag” legislation that allows police and family members to petition for the removal of guns from those deemed a threat.

“If their strategy involves trying to bring back Trump voters — voters from moderate to conservative areas — you probably don’t want the gun issue to get in the way,” said Robert J. Spitzer, who has written several books about gun politics. “You want to talk about health care or the economy or, from Democratic perspectives, uniting issues.”

Still, the tone of this group of Democratic candidates is starkly different from those of years past, driven by a spate of school massacres, the resulting activism and a perceived weakening of the NRA’s clout.

In prior campaigns, even a candidate such as Bill Clinton, who favored gun restrictions, played up his participation in duck hunts. In 2004, Democratic nominee John F. Kerry dressed in camouflage, lugged a 12-gauge double-barreled shotgun and fired at geese.

“The political calculus has changed pretty dramatically,” said John Feinblatt, president of Everytown for Gun Safety, a gun control group. “Just look at other presidential campaigns, with John Kerry or Hillary Clinton. Before talking about gun safety, they would talk about their bona fides as hunters and shooters. That’s just not the case anymore.”

In a significant shift, several candidates made gun control part of their campaign rollouts.

Rep. Eric Swalwell, of California, who announced his bid Mon-

day, plans to make gun violence a centerpiece of his campaign. One of his first events was a “Town Hall to End Gun Violence” on Tuesday night in Sunrise, Fla., with Cameron Knight, who became a gun control activist after 17 students and staff members were killed at his high school in Parkland, Florida.

Gun control still trails other issues in polls of what is important to left-leaning voters, but its profile has risen. The asymmetry is less pronounced than in previous years, when the voting bloc of conservatives deeply focused on gun rights was not matched by a similar intensity on the left.

Many Democrats blamed losses in the 1994 midterm election and the 2000 presidential race largely on gun issues, and for years after were wary of supporting even modest gun control measures. That began to change after the 2012 massacre of 20 students and six adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., and shifted even farther after the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland in February 2018, which spawned a wave of gun control activism by teenagers.

Before the 2018 midterm election, 69 percent of registered voters said gun policy was “very important” to them, according to a survey by the Pew Research Center; Democrats recaptured the House in that election. The issue ranked ahead of taxes and immigration, but behind Supreme Court appointments, health care and the economy.

NATION

Venezuelan leader hangs on as the US pushes

By MATTHEW LEE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. officials have been predicting for months that embattled Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro would soon give up power in the face of economic sanctions and a coalition of more than 50 nations calling for him to step down.

But it hasn't worked out that way.

Despite the sanctions, Maduro clings to power with help from Russia, China and Cuba. The international coalition that sup-

ports the opposition stands at 54 nations, although some longtime U.S. allies have refused to join the Trump administration in recognizing the head of the National Assembly, Juan Guaido, as interim president.

"We are continuing to push," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Wednesday. "We are trying to bring more to the coalition of 54, and we are trying to get those 54 to impose sanctions that match the ones that the United States has imposed."

Pompeo is scheduled to take

that message on the road starting Thursday as he visits Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Colombia. All four have joined the 14-member "Lima Group" of nations in support of Guaido. The secretary will be asking for them to take additional steps to persuade Maduro to step down and allow a new election in the troubled country.

So far, Lima Group nations have taken in hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing Venezuela's economic collapse and have issued statements condemning Maduro but done little else, said Benjamin

Gedan, a Latin America expert at the Wilson Center, a Washington think tank specializing in global issues.

The U.S. and other countries in the coalition do not recognize Maduro as the legitimate president of Venezuela, arguing that his reelection last year was irrevocably marred by fraud.

Russia, Cuba and China have well-established economic and political relationships with the once-prosperous oil-producing nation, and many countries have chosen to stay on the sidelines of the dispute.

Retired general confirmed as US ambassador to Saudi Arabia

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate voted overwhelmingly Wednesday to confirm a retired four-star general, John Abizaid, as the U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, filling an important diplomatic post that has been vacant for more than two years.

U.S.-Saudi relations are in turmoil after the murder of U.S.-based Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a Washington Post contributor killed by kingdom agents in October while he was in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul. That killing has added impetus to a push by Congress to withdraw U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen.

U.S. intelligence agencies believe that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman ordered the murder of Khashoggi, who had written critically of him.

Abizaid received strong support from lawmakers in both parties, including critics of the administration's Saudi policy.

The U.S. has been without an ambassador in Saudi Arabia since Joseph Westphal, who was picked for the job by President Barack Obama, left in January 2017.

Ex-Obama counsel expects charges in Mueller-related probe

By ERIC TUCKER
AND CHAD DAY
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Former Obama administration White House counsel Greg Craig expects to be charged in a foreign lobbying investigation spun off from special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia probe, his lawyers said.

"Mr. Craig is not guilty of any charge and the government's stubborn insistence on prosecuting Mr. Craig is a misguided abuse of

prosecutorial discretion," the attorneys, William Taylor and William Murphy, said in a statement Wednesday.

The investigation into Craig comes as the Justice Department is cracking down on unregistered foreign lobbying and consulting. Federal prosecutors in New York have been investigating two prominent Washington lobbying firms in a similar probe, and Justice Department officials in Washington have been increasingly willing to prosecute people

who they believe intentionally conceal their lobbying work from the federal government.

The scrutiny of Craig stems from an investigation of former Donald Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort and his work on behalf of a pro-Russia political party in Ukraine. If filed, the charges would come about three months after Craig's former law firm agreed to pay more than \$4.6 million and publicly acknowledge that it failed to register with the government for its work for

Ukraine.

The civil settlement with Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP laid much of the blame for the firm's conduct on Craig, who was a senior partner.

Craig's lawyers did not say why they expect him to be charged. They said federal prosecutors in New York had declined charges, but they expected an indictment to be brought by the U.S. Attorney's office in Washington at the request of the Justice Department's national security division.

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NATION

Arrest made in La. in burning of 3 black churches

By TIM ELFRINK
AND KAYLA EPSTEIN
The Washington Post

Authorities in southern Louisiana on Wednesday arrested a suspect in a spate of fires that have burned three black churches in St. Landry Parish since last month, according to federal prosecutors.

"A suspect has been identified in connection with the three church burnings in Opelousas, Louisiana, and is in state custody," U.S. Attorney David C. Joseph said in a statement. "The U.S. Attorney's Office, ATF, and FBI are working with state and local law enforcement and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the victims and those St. Landry Parish residents affected by these despicable acts."

The Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office, which has led the investigation into the blazes, declined to comment on the arrest.

Multiple local media outlets in Louisiana have identified the suspect as a 21-year-old man who is the son of a St. Landry Parish deputy. Authorities planned to release more information Thursday.

Local leaders praised the ar-

rest for bringing an end to several frightening weeks for residents as hundreds of investigators worked with federal authorities to determine who had ignited the fires.

"I'm very proud of the investigative effort that has lead to this arrest. I'm prayerful that we can close this horrific chapter and begin to heal," Rep. Clay Higgins, R-La., said in a statement sent to KATC.

When Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Opelousas, La., caught fire on April 4, consuming the church's interior, it was the third predominantly black church to burn down in St. Landry Parish in the span of 10 days, setting local residents on edge. On March 26, flames reduced St. Mary Baptist Church in Port Barre to just a few walls and piles of rubble. On April 2, a blaze struck the Greater Union Baptist Church in Opelousas.

Authorities still have not determined a motive and have declined to tell residents whether they believe race was a factor in the crimes, according to The Advocate.

On Sunday, State Fire Marshal H. "Butch" Browning told worshippers at Mount Pleasant



GERALD HENBERT/AP

Rebecca Schutte, left, and Lois Smyth, of the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, survey the ruins of the Greater Union Baptist Church, one of three that recently burned down in St. Landry Parish, in Opelousas, La., on Wednesday. Authorities have arrested a suspect in connection with the fires.

that about 200 state investigators were working the case alongside officials from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the FBI.

"There is clearly something happening in this community," Browning said in a statement last week. "That's why it's imperative that the citizens of this community be part of our effort to figure out what it is."

A fourth fire on March 31 was reported more than 200 miles away at the predominantly white Vivian United Pentecostal Church in Caddo Parish, La., but authorities have not established a link to the St. Landry incidents.

For some, the recent fires re-

call a dark history of attacks and threats against black churches in the South. During Reconstruction and the civil rights movement, black churches were targeted with fires, bombings and threats.

In 2015, a white supremacist gunman opened fire on a prayer group at the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, S.C., killing nine black people. Nearly 200 years before, Emanuel AME's predecessor had been burned down in 1822 by Charleston's white leaders who feared an insurrection by the city's enslaved residents.

A black man in Mississippi pleaded guilty to arson last month for setting fire to a black church

in 2016. He had attempted to disguise the arson as a hate crime.

As authorities investigated the St. Landry fires, churches' leaders were resilient, though baffled by the attacks.

"My church has a lot of history," the Rev. Gerald Toussaint, of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, told The Daily Advertiser, noting that it was more than 140 years old. "I don't understand it. What could make a person do that to a church?"

Greater Union had served worshippers for more than 100 years, according to Pastor Harry Richard, whose grandfather helped found the church.

1 killed in NC gas line explosion

Associated Press

DURHAM, N.C. — A leaking gas line exploded Wednesday in a Durham shopping district, killing one person and injuring more than a dozen others as firefighters were evacuating people from buildings near the rupture, authorities said.

The blast reverberated across the North Carolina city — turning one building to rubble, shattering windows blocks away and filling the air with acrid smoke.

The owner of a coffee shop at the site of the blast, Kong Lee, 61, was identified Wednesday night as the person who died.

A total of 17 people were seen at hospitals — six in critical condition and one transported to a burn center — Durham EMS Assistant Chief Lee Van Vleet said. Zoldos said one firefighter was seriously injured and in surgery but expected to recover.

Jim Rogalski, 58, was working in his office across the street from the destroyed building when the



GERRY BROOME/AP

Firefighters and emergency personnel work the scene of a building fire following a gas line explosion in downtown Durham, N.C., on Wednesday. The owner of a coffee shop at the site was killed.

explosion blew out the windows. At least four people working in cubicles by the windows suffered deep cuts, bloody head wounds and other injuries, he said.

"There was lots of screaming," Rogalski said. "It was pretty frantic there for a little bit until help showed up."

Rogalski was seated one row away from the windows and wasn't hurt.

The explosion came about 15 minutes after the office's human resources manager sent an email warning that the city's fire de-

partment was investigating the smell of gas and that workers shouldn't leave the building through the front door, he said as a friend gave him a ride home to Chapel Hill. Rogalski said he was forced to abandon his car in a nearby parking deck because authorities worried the blast may have weakened the structure.

Durham Fire Chief Zoldos said the blast at 10:07 a.m. involved five buildings on the block and catastrophically damaged one. The leak had been reported a half-hour earlier.

Ark. governor to sign 'sanctuary' bill

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson said Wednesday he'll sign legislation cutting off funding to "sanctuary cities" that don't cooperate with federal immigration authorities despite the Republican's objections that the measure could open the door to racial profiling.

The governor announced he would sign the measure, which would also prevent cities from blocking local law enforcement from asking about a person's citizenship or immigration status. Any cities found to be in violation would be ineligible to receive discretionary funds administered by the state.

Hutchinson, a former federal Homeland Security official during the George W. Bush presidency who oversaw border security efforts, had asked the bill's sponsors to require probable cause before law enforcement asked about citizenship and immigration status. He said that without the change there would be too much opportunity for racial profiling.

Lawmakers rebuffed the request, but Hutchinson said the sponsor assured him he was willing to change the law in a special or regular session to include that language.

The governor said he opposes sanctuary cities and generally supports prohibiting such policies.

US adds risk of kidnapping to its travel advisories

WASHINGTON — The risk of being kidnapped or taken hostage is being added to travel advisories issued by the State Department.

State Department advisories have until now included warnings about such things as crime, civil unrest or the potential for terrorism. The new "K" indicator for the potential to be kidnapped is being issued for 35 countries.

The department says the new category was added as part of an effort to give Americans comprehensive information about travel safety.

Among the countries making the initial list are Afghanistan, Mexico, Lebanon, Venezuela and Uganda.

From The Associated Press

NATION



AARON FAVILA/AP

Filipino archeologist Armand Salvador Mijares shows a 67,000-year-old metatarsal fossil bone, one of the oldest they recovered from Callao Cave in the northern Philippines, that belongs to a new species called *Homo luzonensis*, during a press conference near Manila, Philippines, on Thursday.

Bones from Philippine cave reveal a new human cousin

By MALCOLM RITTER
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Fossil bones and teeth found in the Philippines have revealed a long-lost cousin of modern people, which evidently lived around the time our own species was spreading from Africa to occupy the rest of the world.

It's yet another reminder that, although *Homo sapiens* is now the only surviving member of our branch of the evolutionary tree, we've had company for most of our existence.

And it makes our understanding of human evolution in Asia "messier, more complicated and whole lot more interesting," said one expert, Matthew Tocheri, of Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

In a study released Wednesday by the journal *Nature*, scientists describe a cache of seven teeth and six bones from the feet, hands and thigh of at least three individuals. They were recovered from Callao Cave on the island of Luzon in the northern Philippines in 2007, 2011 and 2015. Tests on two samples show minimum ages of 50,000 years and 67,000 years.

The main exodus of our own species from Africa that all of today's non-African people are descended from took place around 60,000 years ago.

Analysis of the bones from Luzon led the study authors to conclude they belonged to a previously unknown member of our "Homo" branch of the family tree. One of the toe bones and the overall pattern of tooth shapes and sizes differ from what's been seen before in the Homo family, the researchers said.

They dubbed the creature *Homo luzonensis*.

It apparently used stone tools, and its small teeth suggest it might have been rather small-bodied, said one of the study authors, Florent Détroit, of the



EUSEBIO DIZON/AP

Foreign and Filipino archeologists work inside Callao Cave in 2015.

National Museum of Natural History in Paris.

H. luzonensis lived in eastern Asia at around the same time as not only our species but other members of the Homo branch, including Neanderthals, their little-understood Siberian cousins the Denisovans, and the diminutive "hobbits" of the island of Flores in Indonesia.

There's no sign that *H. luzonensis* encountered any other member of the Homo group, Detroit said in an email. Our species isn't known to have reached the Philippines until thousands of years after the age of the bones, he said.

But some human relative was on Luzon more than 700,000 years ago, as indicated by the presence of stone tools and a butchered rhino dating to that time, he said. It might have been the newfound species or an ancestor, he said.

Detroit said it's not clear how *H. luzonensis* is related to other species of Homo. He speculated that it might have descended from an earlier human relative, *Homo erectus*, that somehow crossed the sea to Luzon.

H. erectus is generally considered the first Homo species to have expanded beyond Africa, and it plays a prominent role in the conventional wisdom about evolution outside that continent. Some scientists have suggested that the hobbits on the Indonesian island are descended from *H. erectus*.

Tocheri, who did not participate in the new report, agreed that both *H. luzonensis* and the hobbits may have descended from *H. erectus*. But he said the Philippines discovery gives new credence to an alternate view: Maybe some unknown creature other than *H. erectus* also slipped out of Africa and into Europe and Asia, and later gave rise to both island species.

After all, he said in an interview, remains of the hobbits and *H. luzonensis* show a mix of primitive and more modern traits that differ from what's seen in *H. erectus*. They look more like what one what might find in Africa 1.5 to 2.5 million years ago, and which might have been carried out of that continent by the mystery species, he said.

US agency faults VA practices for leg amputation

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — A veteran's foot wound that went untreated due to miscommunication and delays at a Department of Veterans Affairs hospital in Indiana eventually became infected and led to the amputation of his leg, a federal investigative agency reported Wednesday.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel, an independent agency that protects whistleblowers, sent a letter to President Donald Trump with its findings about the Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis. Following up on a complaint from three whistleblowers, the special counsel discovered a policy change at the hospital in 2017 led to "significant delays in care and harm to veterans."

The amputation was a direct result of the delays, the agency reported.

"It is unacceptable that a situation should ever arise where our nation's veterans are provided such substandard care that it resulted in a loss of limb, because of a mistake by the agency entrusted to take care of them," Special Counsel Henry Kerner wrote to Trump.

Leaders within the VA social work service in Indianapolis directed social workers to stop entering home health care consults into a computerized patient record system because they were concerned it was outside of their scope of practice.

The lack of planning, communication and training with the change led to home visits not being properly logged, the special counsel found.

"These actions resulted in a system breakdown because leadership attempted to implement the change without collaborating with key services or allowing time for coordination and education," Kerner wrote.

In June 2017, one veteran was discharged from the hospital after receiving treatment for complications from diabetes.

The veteran had a foot abscess that needed to be redressed twice each day with help from a home health aide. However, a home consult was not properly scheduled in the patient record system, the office of special counsel said.

The veteran was unable to change the dressing on his wound for three days following his discharge from the hospital. The abscess became infected, and eventually led to a below-the-knee amputation, Kerner wrote.

Since the investigation ended, the Indianapolis VA updated its procedures to allow social workers to enter information into the patient record system. It also has trained all key staff members, the office of special counsel said.

Kerner wrote to Trump that he commended the VA for taking steps to prevent future problems.

"I am nonetheless distressed that such a situation occurred in the first place," he wrote.

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IRS: Average 2018 tax refund little changed

WASHINGTON — The head of the IRS, who is overseeing the most sweeping overhaul of the U.S. tax code in three decades, says the \$2,833 average refund in this year's tax-filing season would be up to close to last year's.

Taxes and returns for 2018 are due by Monday.

Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Charles Rettig also said at a Senate Finance Committee hearing Wednesday that an increase is urgently needed in the agency's budget to modernize antiquated computer systems and protect taxpayers' data.

In addition, he confirmed that several more people are expected to be charged with violating tax laws in connection with the sweeping college admissions cheating scandal. The IRS is working with the FBI on the investigation of the cheating scheme.

Some of the parents accused

of cheating to get their children into prominent schools also allegedly wrote off the bribes on their taxes said to be disguised as "donations" to the Key Worldwide Foundation. Consultant Rick Singer, who ran the tax-exempt foundation, has pleaded guilty to charges including racketeering conspiracy.

Rettig testified that some 65 million refunds totaling about \$191 billion have been issued as of March 22. The average amount of \$2,833 is close to last year's \$2,864.

The Treasury Department has estimated that around 80% of taxpayers are seeing a decrease in their tax bill this year, while about 15% owe roughly the same amount. Fewer people are expected to receive a refund. Government officials say that doesn't reflect a change in tax liability.

From The Associated Press

NATION

Principal dies after bone marrow donation

Associated Press

WESTFIELD, N.J. — A New Jersey high school principal who had agreed to donate bone marrow to a 14-year-old stranger in France has died, weeks after he lapsed into a coma during the procedure, his family said.

Westfield High School Principal Derrick Nelson, 44, told the school's newspaper that he found out in October that he was a match for the unidentified French teen. Nelson underwent the typically low-risk donation procedure at Hackensack University Medical Center in February.

His father, Willie Nelson, said Wednesday that his son went into cardiac arrest at some point during the procedure, but he didn't know any other details. He died Monday, according to the hospital.

"He excelled at everything he did," his father said. "Everything he did in life was for a purpose."



Nelson

Nancy Radwin, a spokeswoman for Hackensack Meridian Health, said she couldn't comment on the cause of death or whether any bone marrow was successfully extracted.

"This was a tragic outcome and we extend our deepest sympathies to the family of Dr. Nelson, to all of his students and their families, the community, his friends and colleagues whose lives he touched," Radwin said.

Nelson, who had a 6-year-old daughter and was engaged to be married, didn't know the French teen but wanted to help nonetheless, he told the high school newspaper in February, before the procedure.

"If it's just a little bit of pain for a little bit of time that can give someone years of joy, it's all worth it," he told the student newspaper.

He also told the newspaper that he had several health issues that complicated his planned donation. His sleep apnea prevented doctors from using general anesthesia, and they instead were to harvest stem cells intravenously.

At his final physical exam on Jan. 21, Nelson was asked if he had sickle cell anemia, a blood disorder.

"I said well I don't have sickle

cell, but I have the sickle cell trait," Nelson told the newspaper. "The doctors said, 'Well if you have the trait, you can't do stem cell.'"

They ultimately decided to do the bone marrow surgery under a local anesthetic, he said.

Nelson and the teen were connected through Be the Match, a worldwide bone marrow registry network.

About 70% of patients needing a bone marrow transplant don't have a fully matched donor in their family, according to Be the Match's website.

Bone marrow donation is considered a low-risk procedure. About 24% of donors experience a serious complication due to anesthesia or damage to bone, nerve or muscle in their hip region, according to the National Marrow

Donor Program's website.

No details could be given about the teen's identity, diagnosis or whether he received any marrow from Nelson due to privacy and confidentiality obligations, according to Be the Match.

"We deeply appreciate Derrick's willingness to step forward to donate, and we share our sympathies and condolences with his family," said Dr. C. Randal Mills, CEO of Be the Match. "Marrow donation is a selfless decision that helps save the lives of thousands of patients each year. ... we thank anyone who steps forward to donate and help save a life."

Nelson also served as an officer in the Army Reserve for more than 20 years and had recently reenlisted. His military service included an assignment in the Middle East.

Arizona repository houses animal carcasses for use by state's tribes

By FELICIA FONSECA

Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — Arizona Native American tribes on the hunt for animal hides, antlers, teeth and other parts for cultural and religious use have a unique new resource: the state's wildlife agency.

A recently launched program allows Arizona's nearly two dozen tribes to make requests to the state Game and Fish Department for animals that have died from poaching or natural causes, or after being hit by a vehicle.

Agency game managers, researchers and other employees then keep an eye out for the carcasses as part of their regular work.

"It's all just opportunistic collection of what we find out in the field," said the department's tribal liaison, Jon Cooley, who grew up on the Fort Apache reservation in eastern Arizona.

So far, the program's biggest customers are the Navajo Nation, which has collected bear and mule deer carcasses, and the Hopi Tribe, which has requested turtle shells and turkey and waterfowl feathers. The agency also gathered turtle shells for New Mexico pueblos, often used as ankle or hand rattles in ceremonial dances.

The animal parts — as long as they are not badly decayed — are taken to several freezers across the state for pickup. Typically, they would be left for scavengers, thrown away or burned.

The Game and Fish Department had been working informally with tribes for years to deliver animal parts, and Cooley said it's become more formal now with an established shopping list of sorts, and better communication with tribes and wildlife officials.

Native American tribes tradi-



PHOTOS BY RYAN WILLIAMS, MUSEUM OF NORTHERN ARIZONA/AP

A man wears a headdress fashioned out of animal hide at the Navajo Festival of Arts and Culture in Flagstaff, Ariz., in 2017. A new state program provides animal carcasses to tribes for ceremonial and other uses.

tionally have made use of all parts of an animal. Bones and antlers were crafted into spoons, knife handles and weapons. Clothing and shoes were made from animal hides and pelts. Glue could be drawn from hooves.

Tribal regalia is adorned with feathers, bone breastplates and necklaces made of animal teeth. Parts of the animal were eaten as soon as they were killed, and some were dried and saved for later.

The repository doesn't distribute feathers from eagles or other federally protected migratory birds. The federal government has a repository in Denver for tribes to obtain eagle feathers.

The Comanche Nation in Oklahoma and a wildlife rescue organization near Phoenix distribute feathers from hawks, falcons and other birds to members of federally recognized tribes.

In Arizona, the items highest in demand are tortoise shells. Also

on the tribes' lists are mountain lions, bison, deer, antelope, and game birds like turkeys.

The requests are specific, so Cooley said the department doesn't want the public donating animals or gathering them from the roadside. "What we don't want to become is a depot for dead critters," he said.

One thing Game and Fish employees won't store is bears that have been tranquilized. Chemicals could be in the fatty tissues, and some tribes prefer not to take animals that have been drugged, Cooley said.

While the Navajo and Hopi have been the biggest beneficiaries so far, the plan is to allow tribes in a broader area — including Southern California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado and parts of Texas and Oklahoma — to draw from the repository if Arizona tribes don't need what's there, Cooley said.

The Arizona program appears to be unique in the West. States



A Native American wears a deer headaddress at the Zuni Festival of Arts and Culture in Flagstaff on May 28, 2018.

like New Mexico and Montana allow people to salvage animals that have been killed on the road, sometimes for free, but it's not specific to tribal members. Alaska accommodates requests for wildlife from Native people on a case-by-case basis.

The Native American Fish and Wildlife Society floated the idea at one of its conferences of buying freezers for the Arizona Game and Fish Department to store animals and "everyone was on board; everyone was in support of it," said Darren Talayumpewa, who sits on the society's board of directors. The society purchased four freezers for Arizona.

"In the past, if the tribes had seen something dead, if it was roadkill, they would try to see how they could obtain it," he said. "Back in the day ... there was really no process for Native Americans obtaining various parts."

For Hopi, the carcasses allow the tribe to honor the animals, offering them up in prayer. "No part of the animal is squandered or discarded," said Clayton Honyumptewa, director of the tribe's Department of Natural Resources. "The ultimate veneration of any animal is through its use in ceremonies and prayers conducted for the renewal and continuation of life."

WORLD

Final election results may boost Netanyahu

By ARON HELLER
Associated Press

JERUSALEM — The final ballots of Israel's election were being tallied Thursday, with another nationalist faction tantalizingly close to crossing the 3.25% electoral threshold needed to get into parliament.

Should the New Right party of Education Minister Naftali Bennett and Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked break in, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's comfortable parliamentary majority would grow even larger. The final result depended on the votes of soldiers, diplomats, prisoners and hospital patients who vote in unusual circumstances.

Israel's Central Elections Committee is slated to publish its final results later Thursday. With Bennett and Shaked so close, a recount and legal challenge is possible.

The New Right had one of the most disappointing performances of the election. The pair of popular pro-settler ministers split from their religious-nationalist Jewish Home party and sought greater power by appealing to new secular voters. The maneuver backfired.

Even with two other right-leaning parties failing to cross the threshold, and seeing their combined hundreds of thousands of votes go to waste, Netanyahu still managed to cruise to a relatively easy victory that secures him a fourth consecutive term in office, and fifth overall.

Netanyahu's Likud and the

rival Blue and White party ended deadlocked with a projected 35 seats apiece in the 120-seat parliament. But Likud and its traditional Jewish ultra-Orthodox and nationalist allies were in command of a 65-55 majority in the Knesset, Israel's parliament.

One of the major factors hastening Netanyahu's victory was the low voter turnout among Israel's Arab residents, which was below 50 percent.

Netanyahu's campaign against Arab politicians, together with a new alliance with anti-Arab extremists and the passage last year of a contentious nationwide law which enshrined Israel as the homeland of the Jewish people alone, deepened calls for an election boycott in Arab communities.

Arab leaders accused Netanyahu of demonizing their sector throughout the campaign. Only a big push in the final hours of voting secured the survival of the two primary Arab parties in parliament. Still, they saw their representation dip, chipping away at the anti-Netanyahu bloc.

On election day, the predominantly Arab Hadash party filed a complaint that hundreds of Likud activists were monitoring Arab polling stations with hidden cameras. Israel's elections committee swiftly banned the cameras from polling stations, but Arab leaders accused Likud of intimidating voters. Netanyahu defended the practice, saying cameras helped guarantee a "legitimate" vote.

EU grants extension on Brexit; May urges deal

By GREGORY KATZ
Associated Press

LONDON — British Prime Minister Theresa May urged lawmakers Thursday to spend the upcoming Easter break to "reflect" on the need for a Brexit compromise after a clearly frustrated European Union gave the country six more months to find a way to leave the bloc.

She said doing so and passing an EU withdrawal agreement quickly would allow Britain to avoid taking part in European parliamentary elections set for late May, an unpalatable prospect to many, particularly in her Conservative Party.

May was addressing lawmakers just hours after returning from a special summit in Brussels at which the other 27 EU leaders delayed Britain's scheduled departure from the bloc from this Friday to Oct. 31.

Given that Britain's fractious Parliament has rejected her EU exit withdrawal bill, with the EU on three occasions this year her hopes for a quick resolu-

tion could rest in large part on whether her Conservative Party-led government can find common ground with the opposition Labour Party.

The talks, which both sides call serious and constructive, are expected to continue in the coming week.

Without support from the Labour Party, May's path toward actually taking Britain out of the EU remains unclear.

She is blocked by a strong faction in her own Conservative Party that hates her withdrawal deal and hopes to oust her.

May's own authority has been gravely compromised by the long Brexit ordeal, and she has promised to step down once Britain leaves the bloc — if efforts to get rid of her more quickly do not bear fruit.

"Please, do not waste this time," European Council President Donald Tusk pleaded. He said the EU was giving Britain six more months "to find the best possible solution" to its Brexit impasse.



VICTORIA JONES, PA/AP

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange gestures as he arrives at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London after he was arrested by officers from the Metropolitan Police and taken into custody on Thursday.

WikiLeaks' Julian Assange arrested by British police

By DANICA KIRKA
Associated Press

LONDON — WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange was forcibly bundled out of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London and into a waiting British police van on Thursday, setting up a potential court battle over attempts to extradite him to the U.S. to face charges related to the publication of tens of thousands of secret government documents.

British police arrested Assange after the South American nation decided to revoke the political asylum that had given Assange sanctuary for almost seven years. Ecuador's President Lenin Moreno said he took the action due to "repeated violations to international conventions and daily life."

In Washington, the U.S. Justice Department accused Assange of conspiring with Chelsea Manning to break into a classified government computer at the Pentagon. The charge was announced after Assange was taken into custody.

His lawyer has previously said that Assange planned to fight any U.S. charges against him.

Assange took refuge in the embassy in 2012 after he was released on bail in Britain while facing extradition to Sweden on sexual assault allegations that have since been dropped.

British police said Thursday that Assange had been arrested for breaching his bail conditions in Britain and in relation to the U.S. arrest request.

Moreno, speaking in a video released on Twitter, said the country was no longer willing to give Assange protection. Other Ecuadorian officials in Quito accused supporters of WikiLeaks and two Russian hackers of attempting to destabilize their country.

Assange for years has been an important figure in the special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia probe as investigators examined how WikiLeaks obtained emails that were stolen from Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and Democratic groups.

Assange had not come out of the embassy in London for almost seven years because he feared arrest and extradition to the United

States for publishing classified military and diplomatic cables through WikiLeaks. Although Sweden has dropped the sexual assault case that first led to Assange's arrest in Britain, U.K. authorities said he would be rearrested if he ever left the embassy because he skipped bail in the original case.

WikiLeaks quickly drew attention to U.S. interest in Assange and said that Ecuador had illegally terminated Assange's political asylum "in violation of international law."

"Powerful actors, including CIA, are engaged in a sophisticated effort to de-humanise, delegitimise and imprison him," the group said in a tweet over a photo of Assange's smiling face.

But Moreno appeared to suggest that a swift extradition to America was not likely.

"In line with our strong commitment to human rights and international law, I requested Great Britain to guarantee that Mr. Assange would not be extradited to a country where he could face torture or the death penalty," Moreno said. "The British government has confirmed it in writing, in accordance with its own rules."

S. Korean court orders easing of abortion ban

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — In a major reversal, South Korea's Constitutional Court on Thursday ordered the easing of the country's decades-old ban on most abortions, one of the strictest in the developed world.

Abortions have been largely il-

legal in South Korea since 1953.

The court's nine-justice panel said the parliament must revise legislation to ease the current regulations by the end of 2020. It said the current abortion law was incompatible with the constitution and would be repealed if parliament fails to come up with new legislation by then.

An easing of the law could open up the door to more abortions for social and economic reasons.

A woman in South Korea can be punished with up to one year in prison for having an illegal abortion, and a doctor can get up to two years in prison for performing an unauthorized abortion.

WORLD

Ex-pope writes lengthy letter on sexual abuse

By CHICO HARLAN
AND STEFANO PITRELLI
The Washington Post

ROME — Breaking years of silence on major church affairs, Pope Benedict XVI has written a lengthy letter devoted to clerical sex abuse in which he attributes the crisis to a breakdown of church and societal moral teaching and says he felt compelled to assist “in this difficult hour.”

The 6,000-word letter, published in the Catholic News Agency, which published the full text in English. “Ultimately, the reason is the absence of God.”

“Why did pedophilia reach such proportions?” Benedict wrote, according to the Catholic News Agency, which published the full text in English. “Ultimately, the reason is the absence of God.”

Benedict’s personal secretary, Archbishop Georg Ganswein, confirmed the authenticity of the letter in an email.

Since abdicating the papacy six years ago, Benedict — living in a monastery inside the Vatican City walls — had remained nearly silent on issues facing the Roman Catholic Church, in part to yield full authority to his successor, Pope Francis. The new letter marks an unprecedented moment in the modern church: a significant pronouncement from an ex-pope on the most central problem facing the church.

“Since I myself had served in a position of responsibility as shepherd of the Church at the time of the public outbreak of the crisis, and during the run-up to it, I had to ask myself — even though, as emeritus, I am no longer directly responsible — what I could contribute to a new beginning,” Benedict said.

In the letter, Benedict wrote that he contacted both Francis

and the Vatican’s secretary of state before proceeding.

The pope emeritus finished his essay by thanking Francis for his work to show “the light of God.” But Benedict’s remarks on the topic differ sharply from those of Francis, who has emphasized the corrupted power of clergy and has acknowledged systemic problems that result in coverup.

Those themes also prevailed during a February sexual abuse summit at the Vatican that involved leading bishops from around the world.

Benedict took a far more theological and historical approach and said little about concrete reforms that could better safeguard young people in the church.

Benedict devoted the first third of his letter to changes in society and inside the church beginning in the 1960s that gave rise to an “all-out sexual freedom.” He wrote that Catholic moral theology “suffered a collapse” of its own during a period of major reforms.

One outcome of the sexual revolution, Benedict wrote, is that “pedophilia was then also diagnosed as allowed and appropriate.”

On Twitter, David Gibson, the director of Fordham University’s Center on Religion and Culture, said it was a “major problem” that Benedict was “blaming the abuse crisis on liberal mores and gays and secularization.”

“As a friend notes,” Gibson said, “[Benedict’s] narrative runs against everything said and done at the February summit. So it is deeply problematic and damaging at a crucial time.”

Benedict in the letter also took aim at some of the shortcomings of church law for handling abuse cases. He said the church was “overwhelmed” by cases in which a “genuine criminal process” was required in order to impose a maximum penalty.

of thirst.

That man’s German wife, who, according to prosecutors, “let her husband do as he liked, and took no action to save the girl,” is on trial, charged with murder as a war crime.

Because of German privacy laws, the defendant is being identified only as Jennifer W., age 27.

The indictment in the German case states that the woman left Germany in late August 2014, reaching Iraq by way of Turkey and Syria. Once there, she “im-



DMITRI LOVETSKY/AP

A man walks past an ad poster at an internet devices shop in St. Petersburg, Russia, on Thursday, the same day a bill to expand government control of the internet was approved..

Russia approves bill to expand government control over internet

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH
Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russian lawmakers approved Thursday a bill that would expand government control over the internet and whose opponents fear heralds a new era of widespread censorship.

The bill would install equipment to route Russian internet traffic through servers in the country. That would increase the powers of state agencies and make it harder for users to circumvent government restrictions.

The proposed move sparked protests of several thousand people in Moscow last month. Opponents argue it would allow the state to control the flow of information and enforce blocks on messaging applications which refuse to hand over data.

The bill’s backers have sought to play down the expanded powers for controlling traffic. Instead, they say it’s a defense measure in case Russia is cut off from the internet by the United States or other hostile powers.

Nikolai Zemtsov, a lawmaker who backed the bill, told The Associated Press a future Russia

could cooperate with ex-Soviet countries on a “Runet” where news from critical Western media was restricted.

“It could be that in our limited, sovereign internet we will only be stronger,” he said.

The bill passed by 322-15 in a second reading in the lower house of parliament.

The second reading is when amendments are finalized, and is usually the most important. The bill must pass a third reading and the upper house before being signed into law by President Vladimir Putin.

Since last year, Russian authorities have been trying to block the messaging app Telegram, which has refused to hand over users’ encrypted messages in defiance of a court order.

Telegram’s traffic used millions of different internet protocol addresses, meaning attempts to block it resembled a game of whack-a-mole. Many unrelated apps, online stores and even Volvo car repair services were temporarily knocked offline last year before Russian officials eased their pressure.

The new law could make a

block easier.

Russia already requires certain personal information about Russian citizens to be stored on servers in the country. That measure led to the social network LinkedIn being blocked in 2016.

By moving to exert more control of the internet, which is not overseen by a central authority, the Russian government is taking a page from China’s playbook.

China subjects its 700 million internet users to extensive monitoring and tight controls. Beijing has a system of automated filters — known as the “Great Firewall” — to block political content as well as sites related to gambling and pornography. Chinese users are blocked from using Western internet sites such as Facebook, Google and Twitter.

Chinese regulators have ratcheted up control on local microblogs such as Weibo, ordering them to set up a mechanism to remove false information. They’ve also been cracking down on virtual private networks — software that can be used to get around internet filters by creating encrypted links between computers and blocked sites.

German woman accused of enslaving 5-year-old, letting her die of thirst

By SIOBHAN O’GRADY
The Washington Post

The 5-year-old girl was sick. In summer 2015, she and her mother, who belonged to the Yazidi religious minority in northern Iraq, were sold to members of Islamic State who planned to use them as slaves, German authorities say.

But after the girl wet her bed, the men who bought her allegedly chained her up outside, then left her in the sun until she died

immediately joined the decision-making and command structure” of ISIS.

The next summer, prosecutors say, she patrolled parks in Fallujah and Mosul, Iraq, carrying an explosives vest, pistol and Kalashnikov rifle while enforcing regulations that dictated how women behaved and dressed.

It was around that time, the indictment said, that she and her husband “bought a five-year-old girl out of a group of prisoners of war and subsequently kept

the child in her household as a slave.”

Prosecutors said that in January 2016, she traveled to Turkey, where she applied for new documents at the German Embassy. Turkish authorities arrested her and deported her to Germany, but she was intent on returning to ISIS and was later apprehended by German authorities while trying to return to Syria.

The New York Times reported that prosecutors gathered their evidence from the defendant, who

shared her story in a secretly recorded conversation with a driver who she thought was helping her return to the Middle East but was working for Germany.

Ahead of the trial, doubts were raised about whether the defendant’s discussion should be used as evidence against her. German broadcaster ARD cited unnamed sources as saying that the woman tended to exaggerate and that her husband might not have been a member of ISIS.

SCIENCE AND MEDICINE

MARIJUANA vs. TOBACCO

With more states legalizing smoking pot, experts weigh the health risks of lighting up

By JENNIFER PELTZ
Associated Press

NEW YORK — As more states make it legal to smoke marijuana, some government officials, researchers and others worry what that might mean for one of the country's biggest public health successes: curbing cigarette smoking.

Though there are notable differences in health research findings on tobacco and marijuana, the juxtaposition strikes some as jarring after generations of Americans have gotten the message that smoking endangers their health.

"We're trying to stop people from smoking all kinds of things. Why do you want to legalize marijuana?" a New York City councilman, Republican Peter Koo, asked at a recent city hearing about the state's potential legalization of so-called recreational pot use.

Marijuana advocates say there's no comparison between joints and tobacco cigarettes. A sweeping federal assessment of marijuana research found the lung-health risks of smoking weed appear "relatively small" and "far lower than those of smoking tobacco," the top cause of preventable death in the U.S.

Unlike for cigarettes, there's evidence of certain health benefits from marijuana, such as easing chronic pain.

And marijuana can be used without smoking it. Most states now have legal medical pot programs; 10 states and the District of Columbia have approved recreational use.

"They're different products, and they need to be treated differently," said Mason Tvert, a spokesman for the pro-legalization Marijuana Policy Project.

At the same time, studies have shown crossover between marijuana and tobacco use. And while smoking cannabis may be less dangerous than tobacco to lung health, pot doesn't get an entirely clean slate.

Some health officials and anti-smoking activists also worry about inserting legal marijuana into the growing world of vaping, given uncertainties about the smoking alternative's long-term effects.

Here's a look at the issues, science and perspectives:

Smoking risks

While cigarette smoking is the top risk factor for lung cancer, some of scientific evidence suggests there's no link between marijuana smoking and lung cancer. That's according to a 2017 federal report that rounded up nearly two decades of studies on marijuana, research that's been limited by the federal government's classification of marijuana as a controlled substance like heroin.

While cigarette smoking is a



MARY ALTAFFER/AP

A man smokes marijuana at a Spleef NYC canna-cocktail party in New York last month. Researchers and others are concerned about the possible impact of pot legalization on efforts to curb tobacco use.



FRANK FRANKLIN II/AP

A pedestrian looks at smoking aids on display at a smoke shop in New York.

major cause of heart disease, the report concluded it's unclear whether marijuana use is associated with heart attacks or strokes.

But there's strong evidence linking long-term cannabis smoking to worse coughs and more frequent bouts of chronic bronchitis,

according to the report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

The report also looked at other effects, finding a mix of possible risks, upsides and unknowns. For example, the report said marijuana can ease chemotherapy-related nausea and adults' chronic

pain but also found evidence the drug is linked to developing schizophrenia and getting in traffic crashes.

In recent weeks, studies have echoed concerns about high-potency pot and psychosis and documented a rise in marijuana-related emergency room visits after legalization in Colorado.

Tobacco and marijuana use can also go together. Blunts — marijuana in a cigar wrapper that includes tobacco leaves — have gained popularity. And studies have found more cigarette smokers have used pot, and the other way around, compared with nonsmokers.

"One substance reinforces the use of the other, and vice versa, which can escalate a path to addiction," said Dr. Sterling McPherson, a University of Washington medical professor studying marijuana and tobacco use among teens.

The National Academies report found pot use likely increases the risk of dependence on other substances, including tobacco.

To some public health officials, it makes sense to legalize marijuana and put some guardrails around it.

"For tobacco, we know that it's inherently dangerous and that there is no safe amount of tobacco to use," said New York City Health Department drug policy analyst Rebecca Giglio. Whereas with marijuana, "we see this as an opportunity to address the harms of criminalization while also regulating cannabis."

But health department opinions vary, even within the same state. New York's Association of

County Health Officials opposes legalizing recreational weed.

So what about vaping?

Vaping — heating a solution into a vapor and inhaling it — has been pitched as a safer alternative to smoking.

Experts have said vaping pot is probably less harmful to the lungs than smoking it, though there's little research on the health effects over time, and they worry about its potency when vaped.

The American Lung Association is concerned that vaping will ultimately prove damaging to lung health and is alarmed about a surge in underage e-cigarette use. Adding legal marijuana to the picture "only makes it a more complicated issue," said Erika Sward, an assistant vice president.

Others, though, think policymakers should view vaping as a relatively safe way to use pot.

"I would say the risks are going to be less with that form of consumption," said Rebecca Haffajee, a University of Michigan health policy professor who co-wrote a 2017 piece calling for recreational marijuana programs to allow only nonsmokable forms of the drug.

Meanwhile, some local governments have adjusted public smoking bans to cover both vaping and pot. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors tweaked its prohibition just last month.

Two views

As a former cigarette smoker, New Yorker Gary Smith is dismayed that his home state might OK smoking pot.

He knows research hasn't tied smoking marijuana to lung cancer, which killed three cigarette smokers in his family and struck him 20 years after he quit; he's been treated. But he fears the respiratory risks of marijuana smoking aren't fully known.

"It's crazy that the government, in order to raise (revenue from) taxes, they're permitting people to suck this stuff into your lungs," said Smith, 78, an accountant from Island Park.

Hawaii physician and state Rep. Richard Creagan feels no less strongly about cigarettes. The ex-smoker and Democrat from Naalehu this year unsuccessfully proposed all but banning them by raising the legal age to 100.

Meanwhile, he'd like Hawaii to legalize recreational marijuana, an idea that fizzled in the state Legislature this year.

Creagan, 73, thinks pot benefits people's well-being more than it risks their health, and he expects nonsmoking alternatives will reduce the risks. Plus, he figures legal marijuana could replace cigarette tax revenue someday.

"That coupling was sort of in my head," he said.

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SCIENCE

First image ever made of black hole revealed

By SETH BORENSTEIN

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Scientists on Wednesday revealed the first image ever made of a black hole, depicting a fiery ring of gravity-twisted light swirling around the edge of the abyss.

The picture, assembled from data gathered by eight radio telescopes around the world, shows the hot, shadowy lip of a super-massive black hole, one of the light-sucking monsters of the universe theorized by Einstein more than a century ago and confirmed by observations for decades. It is along this edge that light bends around itself in a cosmic fun-house effect.

"We have seen what we thought was unseeable. We have seen and taken a picture of a black hole," Shepherd Doeleman, of Harvard leader of a team of about 200 scientists from 20 countries, announced as the colorized orange-and-black picture was unveiled.

University of Waterloo physicist Avery Broderick, a co-discoverer, declared, "Science fiction has become science fact."

In fact, Jessica Dempsey, a co-discoverer and deputy director of the East Asian Observatory in Hawaii, said the fiery circle reminded her of the flaming Eye of Sauron from the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy.

Unlike smaller black holes that come from collapsed stars, super-massive black holes are mysterious in origin. Situated at the



EVENT HORIZON TELESCOPE COLLABORATION, MAUNAKEA OBSERVATORY/AP

Scientists revealed the first image ever made of a black hole Wednesday after assembling data gathered by a network of radio telescopes around the world.

center of most galaxies, including ours, they are so dense that nothing, not even light, can escape their gravitational pull.

This one's "event horizon" — the precipice, or point of no return, where light and matter begin to fall inexorably into the hole — is as big as our entire solar system.

Three years ago, scientists using an extraordinarily sensitive observing system heard the sound of two much smaller black holes merging to create a gravitational wave, as Albert Einstein predicted.

The new image, published in the *Astrophysical Journal Letters* and announced around the world, adds light to that sound.

Outside scientists suggested the achievement could be worthy of a Nobel Prize, just like the gravitational wave discovery.

"I think it looks very convincing," said Andrea Ghez, director of the UCLA Galactic Center Group, who wasn't part of the discovery team.

The image helps confirm Einstein's general theory of relativity. Einstein a century ago even

predicted the symmetrical shape that scientists just found.

The picture was made with equipment that detects wavelengths that can't be seen by the human eye, so astronomers added color to convey the ferocious heat of the gas and dust, glowing at a temperature of perhaps millions of degrees. But if a person were to somehow get close to this black hole, it might not look quite like that, astronomers said.

The black hole is about 6 billion times the mass of our sun and is in a galaxy called M87 that is about 53 million light years from Earth. One light year is 5.9 trillion miles, or 9.5 trillion kilometers.

Black holes are the "most extreme environment in the known universe," Broderick said, a violent, churning place of "gravity run amok."

While much of the matter around a black hole gets sucked into the vortex, never to be seen again, the new picture captures gas and dust that are lucky to be circling just far enough to be safe and to be seen millions of years later on Earth.

A black hole's gravity creates a funhouse effect where you can see light from both behind the black hole and behind you as the light curves and circles around the black hole.

Despite decades of study, there are a few people who deny black holes exist, and this work shows that they do, said Boston University astronomer professor Alan Marscher, a co-discoverer.

The project cost \$50 million to \$60 million, with \$28 million of that coming from the National Science Foundation. The same team has gathered even more data on a black hole in the center of our galaxy, but scientists said the object is so jumpy they don't have a good picture yet.

Myth says a black hole would rip you apart, but scientists said that because of the particular forces exerted by an object as big as the one they documented, someone could fall into it and not be torn to pieces. But the person would never be heard from or seen again.

Black holes are "like the walls of a prison. Once you cross it, you will never be able to get out and you will never be able to communicate," said astronomer Avi Loeb, who is director of the Black Hole Initiative at Harvard but was not involved in the discovery.

The telescope data was gathered two years ago, over four days when the weather had to be just right all around the world. Completing the image was an enormous undertaking, involving an international team of scientists, supercomputers and hundreds of terabytes of data.

When scientists initially put all that data into the first picture, what they saw looked so much like what they expected they didn't believe it at first.

"We've been hunting this for a long time," Dempsey said. "We've been getting closer and closer with better technology."

As seas rise, UN explores a bold plan: floating cities

By BEN GUARINO

The Washington Post

A nonprofit called Oceanix is building a prototype floating island as an experimental solution for crowded coastal cities threatened by climate change, the company told the United Nations habitat program Wednesday.

Such buoyant islands would be linked together into floating, self-sustaining cities that rise with sea levels and are built to withstand hurricanes, according to a group of architects, engineers and developers who met at the U.N. headquarters.

The prototype will be a small-scale version that could be ready within months, said Marc Collins Chen, an entrepreneur and former French Polynesian politician who founded Oceanix.

Officials at the United Nations welcomed the proposal but have not officially joined the plan to create floating cities.

The idea might sound outlandish, but urban coasts are running out of land and becoming increasingly vulnerable as sea levels are projected to rise as much as seven inches by 2030.

Ninety percent of the largest

global cities are vulnerable to climate change, said U.N. habitat deputy director Victor Kribo.

To reclaim shrunken coastlines, Singapore and other seaside megacities already pour sand into the ocean, and sand is quickly becoming a scarce resource.

Amina Mohammed, the U.N. deputy secretary general, said the proposal is more unconventional than approaches the United Nations would have taken even four years ago. "We are trying to adapt," she said. "We are trying to think ahead."

The full 4.5-acre floating platform made of wood and bamboo would be "the basic molecule of a shared urban system," said Bjarke Ingels, of the Bjarke Ingels Group, the architectural firm partnering with Oceanix that is also redesigning the Washington Mall's Smithsonian campus.

Each platform would house 300 people. Markets, farms, low-rise apartments and solar panels would stack atop the platforms.

The city would grow in a fractal pattern: Six linked platforms, like a hexagon of a honeycomb, would become a village. Six of those villages would be a 10,000-strong town covering 185 acres.

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AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Boy, 3, disables dad's tablet for 25M minutes

DC WASHINGTON — A 3-year-old boy tried to unlock his family's iPad recently. He ended up disabling it for nearly 50 years.

The toddler's father asked for help on Twitter, sharing a photo of a device message reading "try again in 25,536,442 minutes."

"Uh, this looks fake but, alas, it's our iPad today after 3-year-old tried (repeatedly) to unlock. Ideas?" tweeted Evan Osnos, a staff writer at The New Yorker and a fellow at the Brookings Institution.

By Tuesday morning, Osnos tweeted that he had managed to start restoring the device after putting it in Device Firmware Update mode. Osnos did not indicate whether he will give his toddler the new password.

Buyer of \$8M island accused in \$300 theft

FL KEY WEST — Police in Florida said a man who bought an \$8 million island off Key West is accused in a scheme to steal \$300 in household items from Kmart.

Key West police said Andrew Francis Lippi, 59, was arrested on a felony charge of grand theft.

The Miami Herald reported Lippi bought Thompson Island, which had been the home to the family of philanthropist Edward B. Knight. Lippi also owns the "Real World" house in Key West, where MTV shot its 17th season.

Police said Lippi bought items including a Keurig coffeemaker between March 30 and April 5. He returned the original boxes with other items packed inside.

Semi overturns, dumps candles on highway

NM LORDSBURG — A semitruck overturned in southern New Mexico, dumping candles all over the highway.

The Las Cruces Sun-News reported investigators said the truck rolled, then flipped onto its side while sending wax and wicks all over the eastbound interstate. New Mexico State Police said the cause of the crash is still under investigation. No injuries were reported.

Police trade in patrol car for ice cream truck

OH TOLEDO — Police officers in one Ohio city will be cruising neighborhoods in a new ride this summer — an ice cream truck.

Toledo's police chief said officers will be in the truck handing out ice cream to children as a way to build better relationships with the community.

A donation from the Toledo Mud Hens baseball club to the Toledo Police Foundation will pay for the truck.

Police Chief George Kral told The Blade newspaper that he came up with the idea after hearing about departments in other states that have ice cream trucks.

THE CENSUS

44

The number of stolen diamonds a New Mexico man tried to hide in his anus. A criminal complaint filed in Albuquerque's Metropolitan Court said an officer cracked the case after seeing Eusebio Padilla remove "a baggy" from his rear end during a traffic stop Sunday. Court documents said Officer Daniel DeGraff found 44 small diamonds in the baggy and Padilla admitted the stones were likely stolen. Padilla told DeGraff that he got the diamonds from his uncle and he was looking to trade them for drugs.



ED MURRAY, NJ ADVANCE MEDIA/AP

Easter bunnies

A woman carries her dog past an Easter display in Clifton, N.J., on Tuesday. A New Jersey woman unhappy with her neighbor's racy Easter display used some garden shears to damage it, but the display's owner says it will soon be back up. The display at a dental office in Clifton had drawn mixed reviews from neighbors as well as passers-by who stopped to take photos.

Garbage trucks escort fellow hauler's hearse

IL SPRINGFIELD — The hearse carrying the late Ronnie Davis had some curious escorts: a dozen garbage trucks.

The 60-year-old Springfield resident spent 21 years driving for Republic Services and its predecessors.

The (Springfield) State Journal-Register reported that he was accompanied to his burial by some of the 16-ton garbage trucks that haul off trash from city neighborhoods.

Leading the procession was the commercial-container truck that Davis drove until his March 24 death. A black wreath was attached to the grille of the truck.

Deputies: Men tried to steal cellphone tower

AL MCINTOSH — Three men were jailed in southwest Alabama on charges

that they cut down a cellphone tower and tried to saw it up to sell for scrap.

Washington County Sheriff's Lt. Bobby Jeter told WALA-TV that a worker cutting grass for the tower company reported it had fallen. An inspection of the site near McIntosh revealed guy wires had been cut.

Jeter said deputies began watching the area and a resident called Saturday reporting noises.

Deputies arrived to find three men cutting up the tower.

William Cameron, Ricky Reed and David Weaver were jailed with bail of \$15,000 set.

Man arrested hunting rats along the highway

WA SEATTLE — Authorities said officers arrested a man near Interstate 90 in Seattle after he reportedly pointed a realistic-looking puppy rifle into traffic while hunting rats.

The Seattle Police Department said on its website that a motor-

ist called 911 and reported seeing a man with a rifle in a homeless encampment between I-90 and a nearby overpass.

Officers said they arrived and found the 41-year-old man in the encampment and took him into custody. Police said the man told officers he was using the airsoft rifle to "shoot rats" in the encampment. He was charged with unlawful use of a weapon in a public place.

Firefighter rescues puppy, then adopts him

SC NORTH CHARLESTON — A South Carolina firefighter rescued a puppy twice.

First, North Charleston Fire Department Capt. Paul Bryant dug a shepherd mix puppy out from under a pile of rocks and concrete slabs on March 30 after cyclists heard the puppy's cries.

Now the 34-year firefighter veteran has adopted the puppy, taking him home from the

Charleston Animal Society.

Bryant said that when he learned the dog was headed for the animal shelter, he decided that "he's my dog and he's coming home with me."

Motorist's finger partly bitten off in road fight

NM SUNLAND PARK — Police said a man had a portion of his finger bitten off during a violent road rage fight in southern New Mexico.

The Las Cruces Sun-News reported Robert Moore, 49, of El Paso, Texas, was injured last month following a traffic altercation with Marco Antonio Gomez, 40, in Sunland Park. Police said Gomez was angry at Moore for cutting him off and later confronted Moore on a street.

Investigators said the men and a 17-year-old eventually came to blows and Moore said someone bit off a part of his left middle finger.

From wire reports



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National Enquirer owners eye possible sale

The Bezos attack also threatened to upend American Media's nonprosecution agreement with federal prosecutors. The Associated Press reported in February that prosecutors were looking into whether the publisher violated terms of the deal, which included a promise not to break any laws in the future.



Military rates	
Euro costs (April 12)	\$1.1571
Dollar buys (April 12)	€0.8642
British pound (April 12)	£0.7092
Japanese yen (April 12)	¥108.00
South Korean won (April 12)	₩1,110.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.3079
Canada (Dollar)	1.3385
China (Yuan)	¥7.1919
Denmark (Krone)	6.6243
Egypt (Pound)	£17.061
India (Rupee)	₹121.00/£100
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.4834
Hungary (Forint)	285.67
Israel (Shekel)	3.5801
Japan (Yen)	¥111.35
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3042
Norway (Krone)	8.5140
Philippines (Peso)	₱51.91
Poland (Zloty)	3.80
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7502
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3547
South Korea (Won)	₩1,110.00
Switzerland (Franc)	1.0030
Thailand (Baht)	฿5.88
Turkey (Lira)	₺2.00

White House press secretary Sarah Sanders earlier said "significant work remains" before an agreement can be reached.



WEEKEND



Instrumental pieces
of rock 'n' roll history
Travel, Pages 34-35

BIG VISION

At 10, Marsai Martin
fired her agents.
Now 14, she looks
like a future mogul
with the release
of her pet project

Movies, Pages 24-25



WEEKEND: GADGETS

From streaming to subscriptions, video games enter new frontiers

By MAE ANDERSON
Associated Press

The video game industry is entering new frontiers.
In the past, you plunked down \$60 at GameStop for a copy of Grand Theft Auto or Madden NFL and played it out — after which you could trade it in or let it gather dust.

Now, you'll increasingly have the choice of subscribing to games, playing for free or possibly just streaming them over the internet to your phone or TV.

Welcome to a new world of experimentation in an industry that hasn't been seriously shaken up since Nintendo launched its home gaming console in the U.S. in 1986 or when mobile gaming surged in popularity a decade ago.

"We're in an environment where people want content and media when they want it, how they want it," CFRA analyst Scott Kessler said. "You can play a great video game with a console or on a computer or with a mobile device and you might not have to pay anything. That's a dramatic departure from even a few years ago."

Of course, people will still buy and use traditional video games and consoles for years to come. But as games have become more accessible online and on mobile, it is becoming harder to convince people to spend a chunk of money upfront, said Joost van Dreunen, co-founder of research company SuperData.

Game retailer GameStop's shares fell Wednesday, a day after it projected a revenue drop of 5% to 10% in 2019. And major video game publishers Electronic Arts and Activision Blizzard have announced layoffs.

Responding to changing consumer behavior, video game makers and new entrants like Google are offering new ways to play.

Game streaming

Big players are entering the arena: Google announced Stadia, a console-free game streaming service due out this year. The platform will store a game-playing session in the cloud and let players jump across phones, laptops and browsers with Google's software.

Google didn't say how much its new service will cost, whether it will offer subscriptions or other options, or what games will be available at launch — all key elements to the success of a new video-game platform. Google will be hoping to avoid the fate of OnLive, which debuted in 2010 and streamed high-end video games over the internet. The service had promise, but failed to garner a big enough user base. It shuttered in 2015.

Subscriptions

Apple announced a subscription service that some are calling the "Netflix of Games."

Apple Arcade subscribers will get to play more than 100 games, curated by Apple and exclusive to the service. Games can be downloaded and played offline — on the Apple-made iPhone, iPad, Mac and Apple TV. Notably, says Apple, users won't have to pay for virtual weapons and other extras — something free mobile games typically charge for. The company didn't say how much Apple Arcade will cost when it launches this fall.

Free-to-play games

And then there is Fortnite, a free-to-play game that has become a massive hit with its "battle royale" mode winning over millions of fans. In this mode, 100 players battle one another for weapons and armor until only one player is left. Created by Epic Games, which is backed by Chinese mobile behemoth Tencent, a key aspect of the game is being able to play it on anything from your phone to a decked-out gaming PC.



TYLER MORNING TELEGRAPH/AP

Leslie Hatch of Rusk shops with Rylan Hatch, 7, at GameStop at Broadway Square Mall in Tyler, Texas. The days of plunking down \$60 at a store for a just-released video game might be over.

"I like the interactivity and being able to play with your friends," said Patrick Penfield, a Syracuse University student. "There are infinite possibilities."

Free-to-play games such as Fortnite make money from in-app purchases. In Fortnite, for instance, players use real-world money to buy for their characters outfits, gear or "emojis" — brief dashes that have become a cultural phenomenon performed on playgrounds, in social media posts and in the scoring celebrations of professional athletes.

Penfield finds that Fortnite is free and says he can't see himself spending \$60 again for a game upfront. He estimates he spends about \$10 a month on in-game purchases — meaning he's spending twice as much in just one year.

The trend started a few years ago with Candy Crush and other mobile games that appealed to casual gamers looking to pass the time on a subway or doctor's waiting room. The success of Fortnite shows that this model works with more sophisticated styles of games, too. Despite being free to play, it raked in an estimated \$2.4 billion in 2018, according to SuperData.

And there are many signs Fortnite isn't a one-hit wonder. Electronic Arts' Apex Legends got 50 million players worldwide in its first four weeks. While it doesn't have a mobile component — yet — its style of game play and revenue model are similar to Fortnite. Meanwhile, Activision Blizzard is working with Tencent on a mobile version of its popular Call of Duty first-person shooter franchise.

But it's a gamble if users don't spend enough money in the game itself.

"Even though we can start to see the shape of things to come, it will take a while before they come into focus," van Dreunen said.

GADGET WATCH



The Soliom Bird S60 wireless outdoor camera
SOLIOM TNS

Security camera offers users a bird's-eye view

By GREGG ELLMAN
Tribune News Service

Not long ago, home security cameras were considered a luxury, and were costly and complicated to set up.

The Soliom Bird S60 wireless outdoor camera throws all that out the window with an easy setup, nice quality and no wired power connection.

Inside is a 4000mAh rechargeable battery, which is charged by solar panels built into the camera body. Other similar cameras have a separate solar panel piece that has to be mounted close by and connected to the camera power. With the Soliom Bird, it's all in one piece.

The solar panels look like wings attached to the side of the centered camera, which makes it clear why the product has "bird" in its name. For indoor use, you can remove the panels and make a direct power connection.

The camera records 24/7 with a front-facing 160-degree lens with 1080p resolution video quality in daytime use. In the night vision mode, it reaches 30 to 49 feet and automatically switches from day to night mode for continuous use. A built-in motion sensor is positioned next to the lens.

Mounting it is really easy with everything you need included in the package — even a screwdriver. On the camera bottom is a threaded port to attach the mounting bracket. A rubber weatherproof flap covers a micro SD memory card slot (card not included) and a micro USB port, which is for a direct power connection.

Recordings are saved to the memory card or via free cloud service. The app lets you view each camera. With an IP66 weatherproof rating, the entire camera and solar panels are protected from water splashing, rain and dust.

Mounting, setting up the free companion Soliom app and using the camera is as easy as any I've tried. While setting it up, make sure the camera is charged (use the USB connection for this) and keep the camera and your Wi-Fi router in close range.

The app (iOS and Android) is used for live view, watching record clips, battery power status

and the Wi-Fi signal, which helps you set it up within Wi-Fi range. The app lets you configure notification alerts and has two-way audio to speak with someone on camera.

Online: soliom.net/products/soliom-outdoor-cam; \$149.99

When I review headphones, I look closely at three factors, just as consumers, do: price, appearance and sound quality.

Edifier's W860NB wireless over-the-head headphones have it all, except for the high price tag.

The sound quality is excellent from the 40mm neodymium drivers. They are built with Active Noise Cancelling to help control and reduce outside environmental noise, letting the high-quality music hit your ears.

With ANC, microphones are built into each side to sample ambient sounds and mix it into the music so it's reduced and almost eliminated. Airplane noise is the most common use for headphones with ANC, and after just a few minutes into a recent flight, I knew these were a winner.

Bluetooth 4.1 technology sends the sound to your headset through soft leatherette earcups, which sit with great comfort and are connected with a padded and adjustable headband. A 3.5 AUX input for a direct wired connection is built into the left earcup.

One the right side are smart touch controls, which are incredibly responsive for volume, music choices, pausing and answering calls. They work perfectly with a swipe up and down for volume, sideways for tracks. Answering calls and pausing is done with a double tap. The power can be double tapped to access voice assistants.

You can bend and swivel the headset way more than you would need to, so obviously durability is not an issue.

The headphones come with a hard clamshell travel storage case along with a USB and 3.5 auxiliary cable. You'll get about 25 hours of music with ANC use or 45 hours without the ANC before recharging the internal battery.

NFC pairing and Qualcomm aptX™ audio decoding are supported.

Online: edifier.com; \$169.99

ON THE COVER: Marsai Martin executive produced her first film, "Little," in addition to acting in it.

REBECCA CABAGE, INVISION/AP

WEEKEND

CHECK IT OUT

Events, entertainment and other ways to fill your free time

1

End 'Game': Winter arriving

It's mid-April, but winter's almost here just the same. Whether you're a "Game of Thrones" fan or not, it's difficult to escape the hype surrounding HBO's epic, bloody fantasy series, which is about to launch its eighth and final season. In the first of six remaining episodes, viewers will be reunited with Jon Snow (Kit Harington), Daenerys Targaryen (Emilia Clarke) and their various allies, all of whom are bracing for a showdown with the Night King and his vast army of reanimated corpses. As fans know all too well, anything can happen on this show — to anybody. For those who need a quick — and we mean, in less than four minutes

— reminder of all the crazy things that have transpired in the seven previous seasons, late-night TV host James Corden breaks it all down in the link below. And, for a look at what viewing all 67 episodes straight would do to a person, make sure you see "Late Late Show" writer Lawrence Dai's tale.

- **The eighth and final season of 'Game of Thrones' premieres Monday night on AFN-Spectrum.**
- **See Corden's seven-season 'Thrones' breakdown at youtu.be/7sD40RuVzHs**
- **Watch Lawrence Dai watch at youtu.be/MqNT13ywnl8**



HBO

Kit Harington and Emilia Clarke are two "Game of Thrones" fan favorites. The show returns Monday.

2

It's a new day with Far Cry New Dawn

When last we visited the Far Cry franchise (with Far Cry 5), the Eden's Gate cult was terrorizing Hope County and nuclear war was a looming menace. With New Dawn, that war has come and gone, and survivors are surveying the devastation, looking to establish new settlements. If you're a fan of the franchise, you'll know that open-world exploration and many, many battle missions await. New Dawn makes battling even more fun by giving gamers correspondingly tougher foes as weaponry improves.

- **Full review on Page 26.**

3

New York Met display gets to rock 'n' roll's art

Rock 'n' roll is about sound, but it's also about attitude. You can't really rock without both. A new exhibit at New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art is displaying approximately 130 rock instruments, alongside posters and costumes of famous rockers. Fortunately for those far from the Met, the museum has posted many photos of these fascinating and iconic items and displays online. The photos don't deliver the sound, but the attitude comes through loud and clear.

- **Exhibit pieces at tinyurl.com/y3dc6mn2**
- **More about the exhibit on Pages 34-35.**

4

Watch new film starring Glover, Rihanna for free

Donald Glover and Rihanna's secretive new film "Guava Island" is coming to Amazon Prime Video this weekend. Glover tweeted that it would be available to stream for free starting Saturday at 9:01 a.m. Central European Summer Time. According to Vanity Fair, it will be available to watch for free for 18 hours. The film is described as a tropical thriller about a local musician who wants to throw a festival. It was shot on location in Cuba, and "Black Panther" breakout Letitia Wright co-stars.

- **Watch it at tinyurl.com/yxs6gag5**

WEEKEND: MOVIES



ARSAI'S WORLD

At just 14, 'Little's' Martin a Hollywood mogul in the making

BY LINDSEY BAHR
Associated Press

You might have heard the story by now: That Marsai Martin pitched "Little," a modern spin on "Big," to Universal Pictures at age 10. It's true, she did, but that precocious move was preceded by another, more impressive act of rebellion and a pivotal moment in putting her on the path to becoming the youngest executive producer ever: She fired her agents after the first year of "black-ish."

The ABC show, in which she plays the Johnson's whip-smart daughter, Diane, was on its first hiatus and Martin and her family wanted to know what opportunities there were.

"They were like, 'You should just stick to "black-ish," just chill, take a break,'" Martin said.

Besides, the agents explained, there weren't any roles for a young black girl out there. But the Martins persisted and suggested creating something themselves.

"They kind of just laughed at us. They didn't see the vision. But I think they didn't see it because they saw what I looked like: A little black girl that no one would want to see," Martin said. "So, we fired them."

Four years later, it's almost ancient history for the now 14-year-old sitting in the conference room of Genius Productions, the company she founded, as she prepares for "Little" to hit theaters nationwide Friday.

The office space is a projection of Martin herself, with accent walls in her favorite color blue, her and her baby sister's preferred snacks in the break area (Goldfish crackers, crisped rice treats, etc.) and a PS4 in the lobby (as well as her NAACP Image awards). Her own office is well on its way to having the "Alice in Wonderland" feel she wants with "grand plants" and colorful throw pillows. There's also a very teen-appropriate Polaroid wall, and a perfect view of the Universal sign out the window.

"It's a creative spot for me and a

place where I can express how I feel and just get my mind in a cool place where I can just come up with anything I want," Martin said. "I'm very grateful, and doing it with my family is even better."

After the break with the agents, "black-ish" creator Kenya Barris helped nudge Martin in the right direction, securing a meeting with his friend, producer Will Packer, who's been behind such high-profile hits as "Girls Trip" and "Night School," to hear her idea.

"I didn't expect much, because, you know, I hear a lot of pitches and most of them aren't great. I said 'Listen, I'm sure she's sweet. I'll do it as a courtesy,'" Packer said. "And she comes in and she's got this fully thought out, really coherent, cohesive narrative, with characters and themes. I was like, 'She's how old again?'"

Her story would be about bullying and female empowerment.

"We wanted it to be as authentic as possible ... even though it's a fantasy, body-swap film," Martin said, laughing.

She stars as the young Jordan Sanders, a science-obsessed teen who is bullied so much in high school that she gullies up to be an insufferable bully herself, as the head of a major tech company. The adult version of Jordan is played by Regina Hall, with whom Martin had worked on "black-ish." Rounding out the cast is "Insecure's" Issa Rae as Jordan's undervalued assistant.

Martin loved the whole development process and is glad that it took a few years for filming to start, allowing her to mature a little bit. And then, this past February, something even bigger came along: Martin got a first-look deal with Universal, too.

"It was so exciting, but to be honest, I didn't even know what it meant at the beginning," Martin said. "I was like, 'Oh cool! What is that? Like, OK, this seems very professional. Am I in it now? Like, is this some Jordan Peele-type stuff?'"

When she realized that it meant the studio gets first dibs on anything she creates, she was thrilled.

"I was like, 'Oh, OK! So I can create whatever I want? I thought that was so cool because this mind has a lot of things,'" she said. "I can keep creating things that people don't get to see often."

She knows it's unusual to be wielding this much creative power in Hollywood at this young age, but she also enjoys catching people off guard.

"It's like, 'Oh, snap, THIS girl created this film? And it's kind of shocking,'" she said, laughing.

Her life is pretty crazy right now promoting "Little" and developing new films and television projects. She's home-schooled with a tutor, which she prefers, and she doesn't have any regrets about missing out on the high school experience.

"I used to be the shy kid who would barely raise her hand or speak her mind," she said.

Even now she suffers her own share of self-consciousness.

"That's something that I have to work on: Self-confidence and loving myself," she said. "Your girl gets a lot of anxiety. It's OK. It's a learning process. I feel like a lot of kids my age get it, whether they're in the industry or not."

When she does have a moment to unwind, she plays "gruesome" video games like "Combat Combat," gets facials and massages, cooks and sometimes just watches YouTube. But even then her wheels are spinning about possible collaborations with her favorite YouTubeurs.

Down the line, she wants to direct and write and, basically, do all the things.

Packer, for one, is convinced she will. "She's got a long, strong career ahead of her. And if she chooses to continue in movies and television, you better watch out because she's going to make a serious mark," Packer said. "But she'll make a mark wherever she ends up."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF INVISION/AP

"It was so exciting, but to be honest, I didn't even know what it meant at the beginning. I was like, 'Oh cool! What is that? Like, OK, this seems very professional. Am I in it now? Like, is this some Jordan Peele-type stuff?'"

Marsai Martin

on her first-look deal with Universal Pictures

WEEKEND: MOVIES



Comedy 'Little' is big fun

By KATIE WALSH
Tribune News Service

Ever heard of "Black Girl Magic"? That's Marsai Martin in a nutshell. The 14-year-old "black-ish" star pitched and produced "Little," in which she stars. And quite the team of powerful black women helped her make this "Reverse Big," including co-writer/director Tina Gordon, co-writer Tracy Oliver and co-stars Regina Hall and Issa Rae. But Martin is what makes "Little" fill up the entire screen, through the sheer force of her charisma.

This twist on the beloved Tom Hanks vehicle plays on the same notion that it's funny to watch an adult actor play a kid. But it's absolutely hilarious to watch Martin play a brash boss lady with a taste for the finer things in life. The vicious tech mogul Jordan Sanders is played with aplomb by both Martin and Hall in a pair of performances that fit together seamlessly. It's amazing to see how Martin so easily delivers eye-rolls and verbal roasts like the most mature of actresses.

Jordan's foil/victim/nemesis is her hip assistant April

(Rae), whom she terrorizes at every turn. But when she finds herself on the receiving end of a toy magic wand and child's wish she needs April in a new way. Her assistant relishes her new power as Jordan's de facto guardian for appearances, which involves enrolling Jordan in middle school, the site of her life's worst trauma. After a brutal, public humiliation, Jordan vowed to never let anyone hurt her again, so the walls went up and she hurt people before they hurt her. It's middle school where she'll have to make peace with the unabashed and vulnerable little kid she once was to truly learn the lessons required of the experience.

"Little" is essentially a one-joke movie, but Martin is so charming as a mini tyrant that it gives the joke legs. She has great chemistry with Rae, whose April is at once baffled and gleeful at the state of her boss. Rae modulates April's personality over her people-pleasing and nervousness, allowing her wild, aggressive side to come out in a rush that even seems to surprise her. April and Jordan have a zippy, smart and sassy rapport. Oliver and Gordon's script is bold and daring.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES/AP

A stressed-out woman (Regina Hall, not pictured) is magically transformed back into her younger self (Marsai Martin, above and left with costar Issa Rae) in "Little."

The plot is predictable but occasionally clunky, and some moments seem reverse-engineered not to serve the story but to give Martin a chance to play, like an inspired but inexplicable lip-sync to Mary J. Blige's "I'm Goin' Down" in a posh restaurant. The plot serves more as a foundation to showcase Martin and Rae as movie stars — and they ably rise to the occasion.

The message itself is poignant, and never gets lost in the comedy or humor. To truly love and accept yourself and connect with others, you have to love and accept all parts of yourself, including the dorky, bullied 13-year-old. We could all stand to remember and love who we were at our smallest moments, because even our little selves deserve love too.

"Little" is rated PG-13 for some suggestive content. Running time: 108 minutes.

Sci-fi thriller 'Captive State' more dense than tense

By GARY GOLDSTEIN
Los Angeles Times

In "Captive State," aliens have taken over the world (as they will), but it's the viewers stuck watching this messy, lugubrious sci-fi thriller who may feel like the ones being held captive.

The film is a nervously-soft, dizzying hodgepodge of ideas, symbolism and conceits — and a bummer from start to finish. Reviewers were denied advance screenings of this one for good reason.

It's Chicago, 2027, nine years after an alien invasion in which, let's just say, the aliens won. Now called "legislators," these extraterrestrials apparently live underground (what, cheaper rents?) and they make the laws, such as they are. The most Chicagoans, including the police and government officials, seem to be on board (or "collaborators") with the testy aliens — authoritarianism has, ahem, been good for the economy and unemployment.

Still, alien activity has dev-



Focus Features

Chicago residents deal with life under extraterrestrial rule in "Captive State," starring John Goodman, left, and Ashton Sanders.

astated much of the city, parts of which look bombed-out in typical dystopian-movie chic. Plus, newer communication and electronic technologies are now obsolete. (On the upside, print newspapers are back in vogue.) Oh, and the aliens have im-

planted worm-like trackers in the necks of all the humans, which are a mess to extract as you'll see. Yes, it's a surveillance state. At the same time there's a faction of human insurgents planning an assault on the aliens at a government-sponsored stadium

rally (to fete said aliens), one that shamelessly plays like the giant propagandist event that it is.

Are there any specific people in the story we need to care about? That would be yes and no: There are people, but we don't care about them.

These characters in search of a soul, much less a personality and even the slightest sense of irony, include William Mulligan (John Goodman, dour and one-note), a veteran city cop (conflicted, naturally) tracing the insurgents, Gabriel ("Moonlight" Ashton Sanders), a factory drone orphaned in the initial alien attack (seen in the film's prologue); Rafe (Jonathan Majors), Gabriel's older brother, long thought dead but actually alive and leading the uprising; and Jane Doe (Vera Farmiga, wasted in a handful of enigmatic scenes), a prostitute with a penchant for Nat King Cole records and, it seems, Mulligan.

There are many more characters fashioned out of cardboard here, including others in that eclectic band of rebels, as well as

a host of "collaborators" distinguished only by the familiar faces of their portrayers (Kevin Dunn, Alan Ruck, James Ransone, Kevin J. O'Connor).

It all may have been a bit more accessible if the confusing, clunkily-structured script by director Rupert Wyatt ("Rise of the Planet of the Apes") and Erica Beoney stayed focused on one lead character and a compelling central relationship instead of jumping all over the map. There's something to the Mulligan-Gabriel dynamic — and even what passes for a bit of dimension here — but it's too choppy and awkwardly rendered.

Also, the few times we see the aliens, they're so murky or partially filmed it's hard to get a handle on them beyond that they resemble massive porcupines or cactuses. I know. Cactupines!

As for any requisite tension or thrills, forget it. Same goes for the movie itself.

"Captive State" is rated PG-13 for sci-fi violence and action, some sexual content, brief language and drug material. Running time: 109 minutes.

WEEKEND: VIDEO GAMES



A Highwayman and a pair of dogs attack in a fighting pit run by the thuggish overlords of Hope County, Mont., in Far Cry New Dawn.

Far Cry New Dawn an entertaining return to Hope County

BY BRIAN BOWERS
Stars and Stripes

Nuclear Armageddon might not have improved things in Hope County, but it certainly didn't make them much worse. A slightly irradiated Hope County, Mont., is the setting of Ubisoft's Far Cry New Dawn, a sequel to last spring's Far Cry 5. The first-person shooter is set about 17 years after the previous game's hero battled the Eden's Gate cult, which was terrorizing the rural county. During those years, nuclear war — a looming menace in Far Cry 5 — has come and gone, and survivors have crawled out of their shelters to establish new settlements.

Your character — known as the captain — is part of a team of do-gooders who have arrived to help the Hope County survivors learn to thrive. Unfortunately for the survivors and your teammates, a gang of ruffians called the Highwaymen has arrived to pillage and enslave.

As you roll into the county, the Highwaymen ambush your train and kill virtually everyone aboard. From there, you'll know the drill if you're a fan of the franchise. You'll explore a large open world, attack bases used by the thuggish overlords and tackle a wide variety of missions that lead to a final confrontation with the big baddies — a set of twin sisters in this case.

Along the way, you can gather a posse of sidekicks who can bring a variety of weapons and abilities to the fight. And you'll also need to ally yourself with the reconstituted Eden's Gate cult — now called New Eden — which has decided to disavow technology and return to the

stone age.

The plot of Far Cry 5 was pretty much a downer. In comparison, New Dawn seems like a light-hearted romp through the forest. Part of that is because the story is less involved and the characters are a bit shallower. However, it also seems that the

population is generally a lot less dour. The survivors are pretty pleasant. And most of the sidekicks you'll gather are off-kilter and entertaining — if you can tolerate a hefty dose of crude banter. The only “downers” this time around are a couple of very brutal cut scenes featuring the twins. Though brutality isn't new to the Far Cry series, it seems a bit more jarring in this setting.

New Dawn does introduce a few new elements to the series.

One of the most far-reaching changes is the addition of a ranking system for weapons and for enemies. In previous Far Cry games, you would acquire better weapons and face more difficult enemies as the game progressed, but things didn't really change that much from beginning to end. This time around, certain enemies are much more difficult and you aren't going to scratch them unless you have correspondingly strong weapons.

In order to get better weapons, you need



Overall grade:

B-



Photos courtesy of Ubisoft

Highwaymen defend a base in Far Cry New Dawn. Conquering enemy facilities unlocks valuable materials for use in crafting and upgrading your main base.

to improve your primary base and its accompanying facilities. In order to upgrade your base, you need to recruit sidekicks and acquire ethanol. And the best way to get ethanol is to attack enemy bases.

Attacking bases has always been one of my favorite activities in Far Cry games. And this time around, it is even more fun. When you conquer an enemy facility, you can use it as a crafting center and forward operating base. Or, you can scavenge every drop of ethanol and let it fall back into the hands of the Highwaymen. If you let this happen, the bad guys return with more and meaner thugs. This makes the base harder to recapture — but also more exciting and much more lucrative.

Another new form of combat is the “expedition.” In this, you leave Hope County via helicopter to tackle a search-and-grab mission in another location. These include a beached aircraft carrier, a bridge over a desert canyon and a New Orleans amusement park. These missions are fast-paced and exciting — and repeatable.

Another big change is the addition of special powers late in the game. These come from an unusual tree discovered by the New Eden cult. If you eat its fruit,

you can unlock several new abilities, such as jumping farther, evading detection and moving super fast while resisting damage. These can be very effective and terrifically fun when assaulting a base or participating in an expedition.

The graphics are solid. Hope County is beautiful thanks to an explosion of vegetation that has covered many of the prewar structures. And character renderings and animations are very good — sometimes exceptional. However, you'll still notice a few visual glitches, such as rocks floating in the air.

The controls are well designed and very smooth. And the interface that brings up your map, inventory and abilities is efficient.

The game is rated mature, primarily because of a heavy dose of profanity and a few scenes of brutal violence.

While New Dawn isn't as deep as Far Cry 5, it still makes for an interesting visit to Hope County.

Bottom line: B.
Platforms: PlayStation 4, Xbox One, PC
Online: far-cry.ubisoft.com

Ubisoft provided a copy of the game for review purposes.



More game reviews at [stripes.com/games](https://www.stripes.com/games)

WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Europe



Discover dapper dead dudes in Deutschland

BY MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

Do you tire of gorgeous, historic churches all over Europe? Are you sick of the quaint wholesomeness that you find all over charming villages? Are you a big fan of the Korn song "Dead Bodies Everywhere," and also like history? Then, boy, do I have a church for you to visit.

In the beautiful town of Waldsassen, a 40-minute drive from Grafenwoehr, is a basilica that is a little more macabre than most of the places I've been to. In fact, it's a little more macabre than anything short of a Swedish metal music video.

The Waldsassen Basilica, right on the Czech border, is home to ancient skeletons dressed up in the fanciest

garments imaginable and put on display all around the church.

The skeletons are Christian martyrs exhumed from the catacombs in Rome in the 16th century.

Known as the "Holy Bodies" to the congregation, little is known about each skeleton, except that one is reputed to be St. Valentinus and is now dressed in an 18th century deacon's cassock.

Now, they are dressed up from foot bone to cranium in elaborate Baroque finery, complete with jewel-encrusted shoes and gilded helmets.

Some of them are set up in poses holding golden goblets with jewels in their empty eye sockets or spread across their display cases as one would imagine a jazz singer lying across a piano in the 1920s.

Each one is unique, and it's seri-

ously the strangest thing I've ever seen in a church.

Besides the skeletons, the basilica is cool too. There are beautiful paintings on the ceilings and walls, and you can spend more time than you would think just walking around and admiring the art in this lesser-known church.

You can take an old spiral staircase to one of the bell towers to get a great view of the surrounding area.

Waldsassen itself is an interesting small town, with other sights to see as well. A stunning Abbey library near the basilica would warrant a visit to the town by itself.

There are also plenty of restaurants, cafes and a huge brewery nearby, which makes a quick trip to Waldsassen worth your while.

egnash.martin@stripes.com
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PHOTOS BY MARTIN EGNASH/Stars and Stripes

Skeletons of Christian martyrs line the walls and fill the exhibits of Waldsassen Basilica in Germany.

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Address: Basilikapl. 6, 95652 Waldsassen
About 40 minutes away from Grafenwoehr in the direction of Cheb, Czech Republic.

TIMES

7 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily.

COSTS

Free. Donations accepted.

FOOD

Plenty of restaurants, cafes and a huge brewery nearby.

INFORMATION

Appropriate dress is semiformal (church wear).

— Martin Egnash



WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe

Glasgow surprises with art, design and culture

Glasgow, astride the River Clyde, is a surprising city — and Scotland's most underrated destination. Just an hour from Edinburgh (making it an easy day trip), Glasgow offers an energetic dining and nightlife scene, fanciful architecture and top-notch museums — most of which are free. Today, this once-run-down city feels revitalized, and Glaswegians are eager to give visitors a warm welcome.

Locals here are some of the chattiest people in Scotland — and have the most entertaining (and inimitable) accent. Their unpretentious friendliness makes connecting with people here a cinch. There's no upper-crust history, and no one puts on airs. In Edinburgh, people identify with the quality of the school they attended; in Glasgow, it's their soccer team allegiance.

In its 19th-century heyday, Glasgow was one of Europe's biggest cities and the second-largest in Britain, right behind London. It was at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution, and is said to have produced a quarter of the world's ocean-going ships. After World War II, the city was hit by tough times, giving it a gritty image. But modern Glasgow is rejuvenating itself with a thriving cultural scene and its trademark knack for design and artsy edge.

Glasgow tells its story throughout its vibrant streets and squares. At the heart of the city is George Square, decorated with a WWI war statue depicting great Scots, from top literary figures Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns, to James Watt, who perfected the steam engine that helped power Europe into the Industrial Age. On the same square, in front of the City Chambers, stands a monument to Glaswegians killed in the World Wars.

Architecture buffs flock here to appreci-

ate the unique Glaswegian flair evident across the city's Victorian facades, early 20th-century touches and bold and glassy new construction. Most beloved are the works by Glasgow-born architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, Mackintosh brought an



Rick Steves

exuberant Art Nouveau influence to this otherwise practical, working-class city with his stimulating blend of organic shapes and Japanese-inspired design. You'll have several opportunities to experience Mackintosh's

work in Glasgow. The Mackintosh at the Willow tearooms, dating back to 1903, are an Art Nouveau masterpiece where you can have a meal or tea, or pay to browse exhibits about the history of this place. During the industrial boom of the late 19th century, the Scottish Temperance movement was in full force. Tearooms like the Willow were designed to be an appealing alternative to pubs — places where women could visit unescorted, without risking an undesirable reputation.

Across town, the Mackintosh exhibit at the Kelvingrove Art Gallery hosts a collection of the architect's works. Housed in a grand, 100-year-old, Spanish-Baroque-style building, the Kelvingrove is Glasgow's best museum — like a Scottish Smithsonian, with everything from natural history exhibits to fine artwork by the great masters.

Glasgow's artsy vibe extends beyond its museums, permeating city streets with eclectic mural art. City officials have



CAMERON HEWITT/Ricksteves.com

Buchanan Street is the heart of modern, commercial Glasgow.

cleverly co-opted street artists by sanctioning huge, colorful murals around town to prevent tagging. This creative problem-solving is typical of Glaswegians — taking counterculture energy and turning it into something positive. There's even a map that traces the city's best mural art.

To feel the pulse of the city, head to busy Buchanan Street, nicknamed the "Golden Zed" (Brit-speak for "Z"), for the way it zigzags through town. And as home to the top shops in town, it's also dubbed the "Style Mile." This is the place to people-watch, gaze up at the elegant architecture above the storefronts and enjoy the talented buskers that bring the boulevard to life.

Live music is a major part of Glasgow's personality, and one of the best places to experience this is in the city's West End. I recently belted up to the bar at the Ben Nevis Pub, where I expected to hear traditional Scottish music. But I was surprised to learn that the entire UK was represented in the band, with musicians from Northern Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland. My Glaswegian friend pointed out that this is the fun reality of Glasgow, where tribes come together to make music. And that (as a microcosm of our world in general) is a beautiful thing.

Rick Steves (ricksteves.com) writes European travel guidebooks and hosts travel shows on public television and public radio. Email him at rick@ricksteves.com and follow his blog on Facebook.

TOP TRAVEL PICKS

Flower parade in the Netherlands

One of the highlights of tulip time in the Netherlands is a spectacle in motion. On April 13, the 72nd edition of the Bloemencorso Bollenstreek, or Flower Parade, will see 18 vibrantly colored floats adorned with hyacinths, tulips and daffodils traverse a 25-mile route passing by the famous Keukenhof gardens. The event is widely popular with local and international visitors, attracting some million visitors in a typical year. The theme of this year's parade is "Changing World."

The parade gets underway from Noordwijk at 9:15 a.m., passes by Keukenhof's main parker lot at 3:30 p.m., and finishes up in Haarlem around 10 p.m. Visitors to Keukenhof are allowed to exit the park to view the parade and return to the garden thereafter.

Those traveling by car should be aware of road closures in the area between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. and arrive at the park several hours before then to avoid the worst of the crowds. Other options would be to use public bus transportation from Haarlem or Schiphol; combination tickets including both bus fare and park admission go for 24.50 euro one time.

Another option is to venture



Karen Bradbury

Read more about things to do in the Europe Traveler blog: stripes.com/blogs/europe-traveler

to Haarlem on April 14, where the floats will remain on display at Oude Gracht and Nassaulaan throughout the day. Online: bloemencorso-bollenstreek.nl/en

Film fests in Germany

Film festivals offer chances to catch films you might otherwise never see, and so much more than that. You need not be particularly knowledgeable nor a true film buff in order to appreciate the broad range of side events that typically accompany such affairs, from question-and-answer sessions with the film director following a screening to themed after-parties.

The Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival, or BIFFF, runs through April 21.

BIFFF bills itself as one of the biggest fantasy film festivals in the world, with offerings in the genres of fantasy, gore, science-fiction, thriller and surrealism. The festival venue, BOZAR, offers three screens on which more than 150 movies are shown over 13 days. Organizers point out that fantasy and horror cinema enjoys a renewed interest in times of social and economic turmoil, and the current international climate provides rich fodder for filmmakers. Extremism, fascism, terrorism and climate disasters all are themes taken up here. Ten European premieres will transport viewers to distant corners of India and Thailand. Among the festival's many novelties is the first ZomBIFFF RUN. On the night of April 13, Brussels will swarm with hungry zombies on the prowl for fresh meat, and runners must navigate a 4 km course through the thick of things without losing their two lifelines. The Vampire Ball held on April 20 represents another opportunity for a gory immersive experience. Online: biff.net

GoEast is Wiesbaden's annual extravaganza of films from Eastern Europe and countries of the former Soviet Union. Through April 16, visitors can take in around 100 feature films, documentaries and short films across the festival's seven sections. By



Courtesy of bloemencorso-bollenstreek.nl

This weekend marks the popular Flower Parade, which passes by Keukenhof along its 25-mile route.

means of a festival held in a city with strong historical ties to Russia, organizers strive to place the region's critically acclaimed films in the public consciousness. The side program includes a concert by a Ukrainian female rapper at the Schlachthof on April 12, an Eastern European-themed picnic on the Schlossplatz on April 13, and a closing party with a DJ-spinning gypsy, klezmer and electro rhythms on April 16. Most films are shown in their native languages with English and German subtitles. Online: filmfestival-goest.de

CineLatino, taking place

in Tuebingen, Stuttgart and Freiburg through April 17, screens films in German and Spanish; some but not all films have English subtitles. This festival characterizes itself as the most important platform for Spanish and Latin American films in all Germany. Costa Rica is this year's featured region. Side events include parties, exhibitions, concerts and retrospectives. A handful of events in Tuebingen are free, including a screening of Cuban and Mexican short films on April 12 and 14, respectively. Online: filmtage-tuebingen.de

WEEKEND: FOOD & DINING

Europe



PHOTOS BY MARTIN EGNASH/Stars and Stripes

The Irish Pub in Grafenwoehr, Germany, has some of the best food in town.

After Hours: Germany

By MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

If you're stationed in U.S. Army Garrison Bavaria, your options for dining are sort of limited, unless you feel like traveling a bit. However, you might have overlooked the fantastic food at the aptly named Irish Pub in Grafenwoehr because it sounds like just a bar. Well, take it from me; it's got some of the best food in town.

Ireland may be known more for music and drinks, but it has some great food to offer, too.

Don't let the stereotype fool you; Irish Pub is more than just potatoes. Though, to be fair, they do actually have an entire page dedicated to souped-up spuds.

I honestly didn't realize how many things you can do with potatoes. I mean, boil 'em, mash 'em, stick 'em in a stew, yeah. But an entire page?

You can get a baked potato with grilled shrimp and steak stuffed inside. You can get potatoes with creme fraiche and crispy chicken. There's even a grilled salmon potato. I think they're as good as potatoes can possibly get.

If you're watching your carbs and prefer not to pound potatoes like they're going out of style, they have really good salads. The "Viking Salad" is especially tasty, as it comes with a nice piece of smoked salmon.

They also have surprisingly elegant appetizers like the "Buffalo Kiss," which puts an aromatic tomato basil sauce on sliced buffalo mozzarella. It's then presented in a manner more worthy of a fine dining restaurant than a pub.

Irish Pub does serve classic pub fare, such as Irish stew, which is a very flavorful bowl with chunks of beef, carrots, potatoes and other vegetables served with delicious homemade bread.

One of the most popular dishes is shepherd's pie, which is splendidly seasoned ground beef and peas under a layer of mashed

IRISH PUB

Address: Marktpl. 33,
92655 Grafenwoehr

Directions: A straight shot out the rear gate of Tower Barracks, down Alte Amberger Strasse. Walking distance.

Hours: 5 p.m. to midnight daily, closed on Sundays.

Drinks: A huge list of cocktails, beer and soft drinks.

Food: Pub food, appetizers, burgers, salads, Irish food

Prices: Around \$15 per meal

Dress: Casual

—Martin Egnash

potatoes. Very filling, but totally worth it.

You can order raclette cheese, a kind of pungent, gooey awesomeness, on top of any order. I got it on top of my shepherd's pie and I never looked back.

And of course, as befits an establishment supposedly having ties with the British Isles, Irish Pub proudly serves fish and chips. Remember, chips means fries to us Americans, and you can even get sweet potato fries in their place.

There's even a small dessert menu, and everything on it looks phenomenal. I went for the scones since I've never tried an Irish scone before. I found that Irish scones are nothing like the hard, bread "desserts" at certain chain coffee shops back in the States. These might be rough looking on the outside, but these beauties are so soft inside, they're squishy. More like a biscuit from the American South, but — sorry — way better. And they're better yet with a leprechaun-sized dollop of jam added.

And it's a pub, so if you don't like everything I suggested, you can always have a pint of Guinness or sample the array of whiskeys they have behind the bar.

egnash.martin@starsandstripes.com
Twitter: @Marty_Stripes



The fish and chips at Irish Pub live up to their reputation as a British Isles staple.



The shepherd's pie is topped with raclette cheese.



The Irish stew is a tasty classic that contains chunks of beef and vegetables and comes with homemade bread.



Irish scones and jam are a fantastic way to finish a meal at the Irish Pub in Grafenwoehr, Germany — if you have any appetite left.

Junk-food junket: We test 7 sugary cereals

By MAURA JUDKIS
The Washington Post

It doesn't seem to make sense that sugary junk-food cereals are back in style. In many other aspects of American eating, we've been moving away from artifice and vice. Fast-food companies tout freshness. Salad chains are hot. "Plant-based eating" is the buzz-phrase for the year. Trendy paleo and keto diets made eschewing sugar cool. Companies have worked to eliminate artificial colors, flavors and preservatives.

And, for a while, cereal seemed aligned with that movement. Sugary cereals were blamed for childhood obesity, and the industry made moves to improve the nutrition content in their products.

But in 2017, two years after General Mills made a version of its fruity cereal Trix with no artificial colors, the company brought back the old, Technicolor neon version of the cereal. Customers had complained that the all-natural version, which was colored with vegetable and fruit juices and turmeric, looked dull. Meanwhile, cereal sales continued to tumble for a variety of reasons — people were choosing breakfast sandwiches or yogurts instead, and one much-derided report found that millennials hated cleaning bowls. More healthful adult cereals were performing poorly, too.

So, to counter declining sales, cereal companies are reversing course: They're doubling down on the junky, sugary rainbow colors and flavors that kids know and love. Turns out, all that fiber and nutrition and lack of sweetness just wasn't very fun.

In the midst of this sugary cereal boom, there are so many new flavors! Let's try them, and see which ones we will live to regret.

Peeps Cereal

Sugar: 13 grams per serving
Making a cereal out of a candy that is just marshmallows dipped in sugar — so, yes, sugar-covered sugar — shows precisely how far we've strayed from the light. It's basically what would happen if you took the marshmallows out of Lucky Charms and put them in Frost Loops instead. For a pretty fun-to-eat cereal, it's not much to look at: The yellow, pink and blue loops are supposed to emulate the colors of standard-flavor Peeps. And the marshmallows are plain white circles. Are they ... Peep eggs?

Banana Creme Frosted Flakes

Sugar: 10 grams
Frosted Flakes has introduced several new flavors — chocolate, cinnamon and honey nut, among them — but banana creme seems like a real gamble. People either love or hate artificial banana flavor, and more often, they seem to hate it. If you don't mind fake

banana, you might think that this tastes like banana bread. If you don't, you'll think it tastes like Laffy Taffy in a bowl of milk.

Cinnamon Toast Crunch Churros

Sugar: 8 grams

Somehow, a cereal modeled after these cinnamon-sugar fried pastries managed to have the least sugar of the entire bunch we've tried. But Cinnamon Toast Crunch Churros are just Cinnamon Toast Crunch in a more worldly and sophisticated shape. They taste the same, but the shape makes a big difference: The churros are thicker and crunchier than expected, and bigger, too — almost the size of a Cheeto. Honestly, you should just eat these plain, for dessert. Don't even bother with milk.

Hostess Donettes Cereal

Sugar: 13 grams

Well, they look just like miniature versions of Donettes. They even nailed the powdery residue. The loops are larger than Cheerios but smaller than Frost Loops. They taste like absolutely nothing, though.

Hostess Honey Bun Cereal

Sugar: 14 grams

Set aside the rather off-putting shape of this cereal — it looks like a small or like a mishapen fun can — this cereal is delicious. It somehow manages to have more sugar in it than the cereal with marshmallow bits, which is truly an achievement. It is just a bowl of sugar, and therefore, it is a delight.

Maple Bacon Donuts Honey Bunches of Oats

Sugar: 9 grams

There is no pork in this cereal, in case you were worried. But that doesn't make it any less weird. It's your typical Honey Bunches of Oats flakes, with some doughnut loops thrown in — they even have red sprinkles, like a bacon-topped doughnut. Which were all the rage in 2010. It is altogether rather unpleasant.

Chicken & Waffles Honey Bunches of Oats

Sugar: 9 grams

If you recognize those adorable waffle-shaped pieces, it's because Post, the maker of Honey Bunches of Oats, used to make a cereal called Waffle Crisp. It was discontinued last summer. Are the waffles in here just the leftover bits of Waffle Crisp? Seems possible! Anyway, all you need to know about this cereal is that the chicken drumstick-shaped pieces contain onion powder, garlic powder and a spice blend of black pepper, marjoram and thyme. In milk. It tastes sort of like sweet corn bread stuffing for Thanksgiving decided to cosplay as breakfast.

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Europe



PHOTOS BY GEORGE HOBCA/TNS

The 45-minute guided tour of the Pantheon's dome offers impressive views of Paris.

Perfect pairing

Renewing a lifelong love affair with Paris and London

By GEORGE HOBCA
Tribune News Service

My emotional attachment to Paris and London started early in life.

Starting when I was about 6 years old, my Uncle Hashem would have me over for lunch and a French lesson. I could count from one to 100 in French almost before I could do it in English. He was a chef and restaurant owner, so my lessons would always include an elegantly prepared lunch and, because he was French, when I was older, a watered-down glass of Chablis.

A few blocks away from his godmother, Bessie, who was English, also never married and living alone. For years, I'd visit her every Saturday. On each visit, she'd buy me one Matchbox toy — a bright red double-decker bus one week, a silver Rolls Royce another week. I have a collection of more than 100 of these die-cast metal vehicles, one of my proudest possessions.

When I was a child, the thought of riding on the upper deck of a bright red London Routemaster bus seemed like the height of adventure, even a ride to nowhere. It still does.

Thus began my love affairs with France and England, and I renewed them this past winter with visits to both London and Paris.

It's not just me. Paris and London are Europe's two most-visited cities and for good reasons. No others anywhere combine so much history with so many things to do and see, so many

gorgeous buildings, so many important museums, large and small. And they're connected by a two-hour train ride under the sea, an amazing feat of engineering (Eurostar.com, one-way fares from \$59). Why fly all the way to one and not see the other when it's so easy to see both? That's the message of a joint promotion between the two cities' official tourism promotion firms: Parisinfo.com and Visitlondon.com. We're only 120 minutes apart! Vive la difference!

And there are differences, lots. Connecting France and England by rail was once considered a travesty, at least by the English. For centuries, they did everything possible to keep the French on their side of the Channel, with limited success (the Norman Conquest in 1066 was one notable failure). In 1986, when French President Francois Mitterrand visited Canterbury, England, to sign the accord that launched the tunnel project, mobs chant-

ing "Froggy! Froggy! Out! Out! Out!" greeted him. Perhaps those same people later voted to leave the European Union.

Despite past differences, London and Paris have more in common than one might think.

London has Hampstead Heath, a delightful place to ramble; in Paris, the Bois de Boulogne is equally wild and lovely.

London has Harrod's Food Hall, where you can spend hours salivating; Paris has the Galeries Lafayette Gourmet.

London has the Imperial War Museum with all manner of tools of war; Paris has Les Invalides, with more than 500,000 objects used in various battles, not all of them on display at one time.

Instagrammers in London love viewing the city from the pedestrian-only Millennium Bridge across the Thames, beautiful but so wobbly ("unexpected lateral vibration") it was closed for renovations soon after opening. In Paris, they flock to the Pont des

Arts, the footbridge that people have festooned — or vandalized, take your pick — with padlocks across the Seine.

In London, at Westminster Abbey (westminster-abbey.org, 20 pounds), they've entombed the remains of England's leading citizens (Chaucer, Dickens, Sir Isaac Newton, and others), and in Paris, at the Pantheon, Voltaire, Victor Hugo, Madame Curie and other notables are laid to rest.

Be sure to take the 45-minute guided tour of the Pantheon's dome (7.5 euros), well worth it for the views alone.

London has a postal museum; so does Paris (closed for renovation), although only London's comes with an underground railway that welcomes visitors.

London's Museum of Science (sciencemuseum.org.uk, free) has three Michelin stars; so has Paris' (cite-sciences.fr, 12 euros) and both are endlessly fascinating. At the London one, I watched a video showing the precise moment that a British Telecom manager flipped a switch to automate telephone switchboards across London. Row after row of operators stand up, grab their coats and purses, and march into history. Talk about disruption!

You can take a cruise along the Canal St. Martin in Paris (Canarima.com, 18 euros); or on the Regent's Canal (londonwaterbus-company.com, 12 pounds), from London's Camden Market, full of young people shopping and eating, many of them hipsters, the beards bushier than in other parts of London, the fashion more "street," as you admire the fine houses along the banks and the graffiti on the walls and

bridges, if graffiti is something you admire.

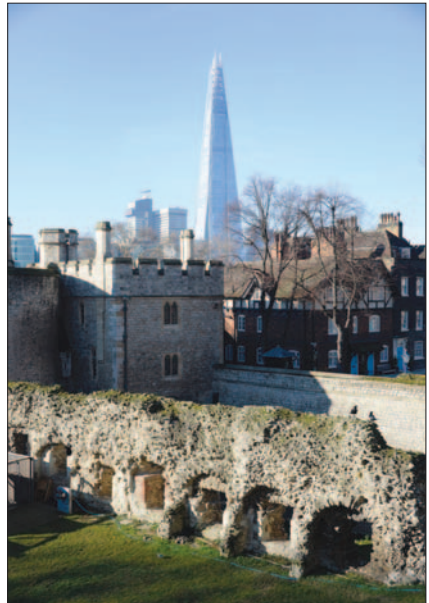
I don't admire graffiti especially, but I took a tour in Paris with Fresh Street Art Tour (freshstreetarttourparis.com, 12.50 euros). I don't know where graffiti begins and street art ends, but it was eye-opening.

London imprisoned and executed royalty in the Tower of London; in Paris, they used the Conciergerie. I visited the Tower (my first time in 40 years), where those two princes, mere boys, were slain by their evil uncle. I had the place almost to myself because I signed up for the opening ceremony (24.70 pounds, hrp.org.uk). Show up at 8:45 a.m.

and you'll see the Coldstream Guards in their red tunics and furry black hats march to and fro, performing their official duties (something to do with keys, I gather), as they've done day after day over the centuries. There are no queues at this hour and you'll have your very own Beefeater to quiz with questions such as, "How do you become a Beefeater?" and "Why do they call them Beefeaters?" My personal Beefeater, Bob, explained that you need 21 or more years of good conduct in the British army or navy, and a bit of the thespian because you are "part of the show." As for the second question, like so many things in life, nobody knows the answer.

In Paris, I toured the Conciergerie (a first for me), where "let them eat cake" Marie Antoinette was imprisoned — her cell is on display with original artifacts — and from which she was later led to the guillotine.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31



London old and new: The Shard tower rises above remnants of the Roman wall dating from 200 A.D. near the Tower of London.



London's Regent's Canal is seen here. Both London and Paris offer canal cruises, two of the many things the cities have in common.

FROM PAGE 30

Historians claim that she was misquoted. Maybe she said brioche, not cake? She lost her head anyway. Her former prison is next door to St. Chapelle, a kaleidoscope of stained-glass windows; I make time to visit whenever I'm in Paris, if only for a few minutes of jaw-dropping wonder.

Tip: if you plan to see a lot of the attractions mentioned here, then look into the Paris museum and monument pass (en.paris-museumpass.com). You'll save money and time because it allows you to skip entrance lines.

Both cities have grand thoroughfares. In Paris, the grandest boulevard is the Champs-Élysées, crowned by the Arc de Triomphe, which I climbed for the first time on this visit; in London it's Regent Street, celebrating its 200th anniversary as London's only street devoted solely to retail (no residences or offices), and with not a single empty shop.

In Paris, you can dine well in a railroad station: the historic Train Bleu in the Gare de Lyon (le-train-bleu.com). "It's just like dining in a museum," gushes the headwaiter as I sipped my Champagne; he flitted across the room chatting with each table for a minute or two as if he were on a stage, which in some ways he was. In London, the old Midland Railway Hotel, next to the cathedral-like St. Pancras International terminus, is now operated by Renaissance Hotels and offers The Booking Hall restaurant, just steps from the Eurostar gates.

In London, you can climb to the whispering gallery at St. Paul's Cathedral (stpauls.co.uk, 17 pounds if bought in advance) and whisper "can you hear me now?" to someone across the dome, and in Paris you can climb the towers of Notre Dame Cathedral (8.50 euros) and take a selfie with a gargoyles or two.

And yet there are some things that I love to do in London where there's no Parisian equivalent, and vice versa. Nothing compares to London's double-decker buses or with London's black cabs, the best taxis in the world; expensive yes, but it's an experience. London's cabbies don't use GPS because they've memorized every street, lane, byway and highway in the metropolis.

Paris' sidewalk cafes have no equal. I recommend that every visitor to Paris spend at least an hour dawdling in one whether on the sidewalk or inside. Notice the waiters. These men are pros, and no army has ever been better organized and strategic. Your 5-euro coffee or Evian buys you a seat for as long as you wish, within reason.

Although English cuisine has improved vastly from the days of bubble-and-squeak when I was a student at Oxford in the 1970s, no city can match the culinary delights of Paris.

Not that London lacks tasty bread. But at Mon Plaisir (mon-plaisir.co.uk), the family-run temple of traditional British cuisine in London, where the bubbly proprietress greets every guest, they take no chances. In business for 50 years, the restaurant insists on flying bread from Paris each morning — or perhaps it arrives on the Eurostar. I was too busy stuffing my mouth with it to ask.

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WEEKEND: QUICK TRIPS

Pacific



Spiritual experience

Leave your worries behind and find inner peace at South Korea's Mangisa Temple

BY MATTHEW KEELER
Stars and Stripes

In South Korea, the demands of daily life and the stress of living in a bustling city often require residents to seek a bit of rest and relaxation. Luckily, a temple compound nestled in the hills of Jinwi, between Osan and Pyeongtaek, provides the perfect location for those looking to get in touch with their spiritual side.

Located just 6 miles from Osan Air Base is Mangisa Temple, home to the Iron Seated Buddha, one of South Korea's na-

tional treasures. The country designates national treasures based upon the historical and artistic value of exceptional artifacts or locations — and this extravagant golden statue, said to have been created in the 8th or 9th century, is no exception.

Like the Buddha statue that forms the centerpiece of the temple's grounds, the Mangisa Temple is said to have been established during Korea's Goryeo Period sometime around the year 962. These days, the site remains a popular location for practicing Buddhists to make spiritual pilgrimages — but don't let the temple's

religious roots deter you from visiting. Upon arriving at the temple entrance, visitors pass through a gate decorated with intricate wooden carvings of dragons. Here, worshippers are expected to leave all problems at the door — literally. Whether plagued by the stresses of work or an impending college entrance exam, pass through the gates of Mangisa Temple and your troubles will (hopefully) vanish into thin air.

Immediately after passing through the temple gate, take note of the colorful statues of the Four Heavenly Kings, Buddhist gods that are said to watch over a different cardinal direction of the world. The Four Heavenly Kings are an essential component of Buddhism and can be found in some form at nearly all Buddhist temples.

A nearby small set of stairs leads into an open courtyard, providing a magnificent view of everything Mangisa Temple has to offer.

At the temple, visitors may enter four buildings of worship, each containing unique artifacts and artwork dating back hundreds, or even thousands, of years. Be sure to wear clean socks, as removing one's shoes is a requirement before entering any of these structures.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33

ON THE QT

DIRECTIONS

Address: 181-82 Jinwi-ro, Jinwi-myeon, Pyeongtaek
Mangisa Temple is reachable by public transportation via the Seoul Subway Line 1 at Jinwi Station. The temple gate is roughly 3 km from the station, and taxis are readily available. By car from Osan Air Base, the temple is a short drive away along Jisan-ro to Route 317.

TIMES

While there are no official operating hours, visitation is recommended between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

COSTS

Visiting the temple is free, but donations are appreciated.

FOOD

On weekends, temple staff serves a vegan lunch comprised of traditional Korean dishes. The meal is free, but donations are encouraged.

INFORMATION

Phone: 031-664-7336

— Matthew Keeler

Located in Daegu-gyeong Hall, the Iron Seated Buddha is the centerpiece of the Mangisa Temple in Jinwi, South Korea. Built around the year 962, the temple houses four colorful buildings of worship.

PHOTOS BY MATT KEELER/Stars and Stripes

WEEKEND: TRAVEL

Pacific

FROM PAGE 32

Although photography is permitted inside, the temple asks that visitors refrain from taking photos while worshippers are paying their respects to the Buddha.

Daegujeon Hall is where visitors can find the Iron Seated Buddha of Mangisa Temple. When entering the hall, followers of the faith will respectfully bow several times to the Buddha. Some bring offerings of fresh fruits and vegetables to place at the statue's feet.

Hundreds of colorful lanterns and banners hang from the roof of the hall, and, for a small fee, worshippers can have the name of a loved one inscribed upon one of these banners to ask for prayers and good fortune.

On Sunday, May 12, the temple celebrates Buddha's birthday by hosting a lively celebration complete with decorations, food and other festivities.

If you make plans to visit Mangisa Temple on a weekend, it might be best to come hungry, as the temple groundskeepers prepare an elaborate meal consisting of a variety of traditional Korean dishes. In keeping with Buddhist tradition, the meal is prepared without the use of animal products, making this a unique dining experience for vegans and vegetarians alike. Taking part in the meal, which is served at noon, is free — but donations are gladly accepted at deposit boxes located near the Four Heavenly Kings.

There's more to Mangisa Temple than religious artifacts. The grounds also offer some spectacular hiking opportunities on several trails that wind through the hills of Jinwi. The trails are easy to identify, and some portions have ropes for hikers to grab onto for extra stability. The route I took during my visit clocked in at just over 3.5 miles from start to finish, according to my fitness tracker.

The summit is easy to identify, thanks to a large South Korean flag. There's also an observation deck with binoculars providing a magnificent view of the city below. It's an ideal spot for a quick snack or a brief rest before descending back to the temple.

Mangisa Temple is one of the few places in the Pyeongtaek area that brings residents out of the city and closer to nature. Whether you're seeking to explore Korea's past, to find a bit of serenity on an enjoyable hike, or simply looking to visit someplace new, this peaceful compound is a great way to leave the troubles of your 21st century lifestyle behind — if only for an afternoon.

keeler.matthew@strips.com

If you build it ...

Tokyo exhibit in Odaiba demonstrates construction equipment, educates visitors

By KEIICHI SHIMIZU
Japan News Yomiuri

An exhibition featuring heavy machinery used at construction sites is being held at Miraikan (National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation) in the Odaiba area of Koto Ward, Tokyo.

The special exhibition, titled "Kojichu! Tachiiri Kinshi! Juki no Genba" ("The 'Under Construction' Is It Safe to Enter? Heavy Machinery in Use!"), organized by The Yomiuri Shimbun and others, displays an array of 10 heavy machines, ranging from the nation's first domestically built hydraulic excavator to a state-of-the-art, robot-like concept machine with two arms. Visitors can even climb aboard a couple of the machines.

These machines include a bulldozer used in such work as leveling rough land. In Japan, the use of bulldozers became widespread after the end of World War II, and they served as a driving force for postwar reconstruction work.

The exhibition also includes the country's first domestically-built hydraulic excavator, which made its appearance in 1961, three years before the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. Such shovels were used in construction projects during the days of the nation's high economic growth, such as building expressways and Shinkansen lines.

A hydraulic excavator can be used for various operations. In addition to digging into the ground with a scoop-like bucket attached to the end of its arm, it can carry out other tasks — such as grabbing and cutting — by using other attachments.

Overseas, the demolition of old buildings is often carried out with explosives. But that is difficult in urban areas of Japan, where buildings are crowded close together. Instead, heavy machinery is used to smash buildings' concrete and cut through their steel frames. The exhibits also include huge pairs of scissors that can be attached to a hydraulic excavator to chop through steel frames and iron rebar while also smashing concrete blocks to pieces. These monster scissors have an overwhelming presence: They look like a Tyrannosaurus with its jaws wide open.



A bulldozer is on exhibit.

Visitors to the museum can enjoy watching a video that shows how the hydraulic excavator with huge scissors works.

Another exhibit is a crane outfitted with a spidery arm that can be extended to reach a height of 28 feet. The crane can be folded up into a package just 2.2 feet wide. In this form, it can move through narrow spaces to be used indoors.

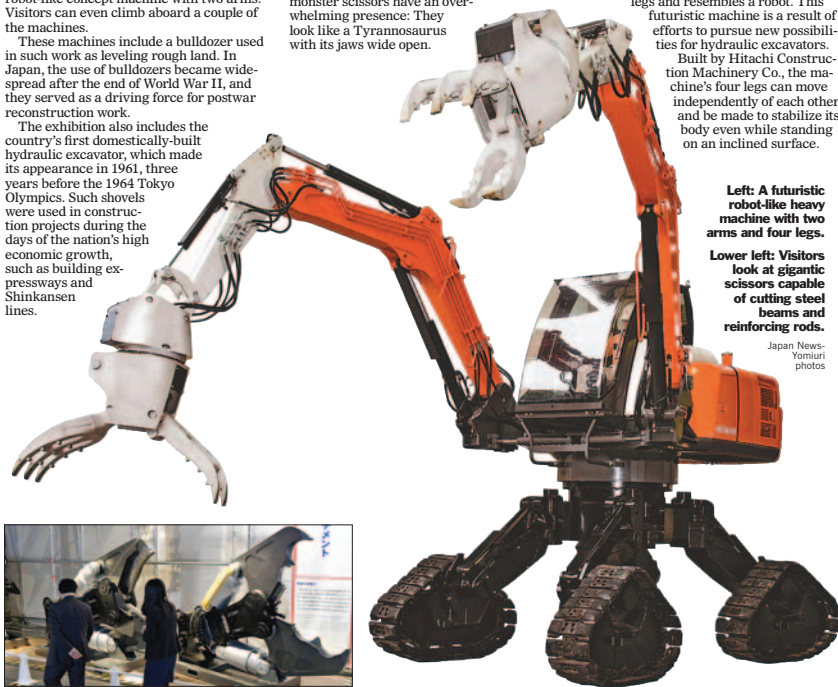
The exhibition also displays a pair of "visualization" goggles. The device enables a user to see three-dimensional images of objects that are normally hidden from view, such as underground water pipes, based on their design drawings.

The most unusual-looking heavy machine in the exhibit has two arms and four legs and resembles a robot. This futuristic machine is a result of efforts to pursue new possibilities for hydraulic excavators. Built by Hitachi Construction Machinery Co., the machine's four legs can move independently of each other and be made to stabilize its body even while standing on an inclined surface.

Left: A futuristic robot-like heavy machine with two arms and four legs.

Lower left: Visitors look at gigantic scissors capable of cutting steel beams and reinforcing rods.

Japan News-Yomiuri photos



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WEEKEND: TRAVEL/MUSIC



THE ART OF ROCK 'N' ROLL IS STILL BEATING

PHOTOS BY SETH WENIG/AP

A man looks at a guitar assembled and played by Eddie Van Halen during a press preview of "Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock & Roll," at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York on April 1. The exhibit, which showcases the instruments of rock 'n' roll legends, opened to the public April 8 and runs until Oct. 1, 2019, before moving to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, where it will be on view from Nov. 20, 2019, through Sept. 13, 2020.

Exuberant Met exhibit explores rock history through stars' instruments

By KATHERINE ROTH
Associated Press

Museum exhibits tend to be quiet. Not this one.

In "Play It Loud," an exuberant show that can be heard as well as seen, the Metropolitan Museum of Art takes on the history of rock 'n' roll through iconic instruments on loan from some of rock's biggest names. There are flamboyant costumes worn by Prince and Jimmy Page, videotaped interviews with "guitar gods," even shattered guitars.

The show runs here from April 8 through Oct. 1 before traveling to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, in Cleve-



A Gibson double-neck guitar played by Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin and made famous during live performances of "Stairway to Heaven" is on display.

land, where it will be on view from Nov. 20, 2019, through Sept. 13, 2020.

"We're looking at rock 'n' roll instruments as an art. They serve as muses, tools and visual icons, and many of them are hand-painted and lovingly designed," says Jayson Kerr Dobney,

curator in charge of the department of musical instruments at the Met. He organized "Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock & Roll," with Craig J. Inciardi, curator and director of acquisitions at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

'My guitar was confiscated if I took it to the school field to play. That's the kind of respect given to guitars in those days. So to see guitars from people I listen to ... it's absolutely phenomenal. It's humbling.'

Jimmy Page
Led Zeppelin guitarist

WEEKEND: TRAVEL/MUSIC

FROM PAGE 34

For anyone who ever dreamed of climbing onstage at a rock concert for a closer look, this could be your best shot.

"Instruments are some of the most personal objects connected to musicians, but as audience members we are primarily used to seeing them from far away, up on a stage in performance. This exhibition will provide a rare opportunity to examine some of rock 'n' roll's most iconic objects up close," says Dobney.

Highlights include Chuck Berry's ES-350T guitar (at the entrance to the exhibit), John Lennon's 12-string Rickenbacker 325, an electric 500/1 "violin" bass on loan from Paul McCartney, Keith Moon's drum set, and the white Stratocaster played at Woodstock by Jimi Hendrix.

Page, the guitarist and founder of Led Zeppelin, told The Associated Press that when curators approached him and explained their vision of the exhibit — you approach it through the Greco-Roman art galleries and then suddenly come upon Berry's guitar — he was all in.

"My guitar was confiscated if I took it to the school field to play," he says. "That's the kind of respect given to guitars in those days."

"So to see guitars from people I listen to ... it's absolutely phenomenal. It's humbling."

Over 130 instruments are featured in the show, including ones played and beloved by the Beatles, Elvis Presley, Bruce Springsteen, The Rolling Stones, The Grateful Dead, Lady Gaga, Joan Jett, Metallica, Steve Miller, Page and other rock 'n' roll greats. The collection spans 1939 to 2017. All the instruments are on loan, most by the musicians themselves, although Miller has promised to donate to the Met his 1961 Les Paul TV Special guitar, painted by surfboard artist Bob Cantrell.

The show features its own rock 'n' roll soundtrack and is organized in thematic sections.

"Setting the Stage" explores rock's early days in the American South of the late 1940s and early 1950s, when pianos, saxophones and acoustic guitars were among the instruments of choice. Soon, Berry helped revolutionize the sound, establishing the electric guitar as the genre's primary voice and visual icon.

Also featured is a setup like that used by the Beatles on "The Ed Sullivan Show" in 1964. After that performance, "thousands of rock bands were formed using that same lineup: two guitars, a bass and a drum set," says Dobney.

The "Guitar Gods" section traces that phrase to Eric Clapton's stardom and a piece of 1966 graffiti in London proclaiming, "Clapton is God." Others dubbed guitar gods included Page, Jeff Beck, Pete Dinklage and Hendrix. All exemplified virtuoso musicianship and awe-inspiring swagger. By the 1970s, women, too, were fronting bands and finding platforms for their own personae and skills, Dobney says.

"The Rhythm Section" explores the sources of the genre's powerful rhythms, with accented backbeats created using a drum set and electric bass guitar.

Even as guitars were lovingly painted, and sometimes even built by the musicians who played them (like Eddie Van Halen's red and white "Frankenstein" guitar, featuring a Fender-style body and neck with Gibson electronics), instruments were also famously destroyed by rock stars as part of their act.

"It may be the only musical genre where destruction of instruments became a part of the performance," Dobney says.

Featured is a fragment of a Hendrix guitar that he set on fire and smashed onstage at the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967; a Gibson SG Special guitar destroyed by Townshend during a photo shoot with Annie Leibovitz for Rolling



PHOTOS BY SETH WENIG/AP

A Gibson ES-350T played by rock 'n' roll pioneer Chuck Berry greets visitors to the exhibit "Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock & Roll" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Over 130 instruments are featured in the show, including ones played and beloved by the Beatles, Elvis Presley, Bruce Springsteen, The Rolling Stones, The Grateful Dead, Lady Gaga, Joan Jett, Metallica, Steve Miller, Jimmy Page and other rock 'n' roll greats.

Stone (and preserved in Lucite); and a modified Hammond L-100 organ used by Keith Emerson as a "stunt instrument," which he would jump on, pull on top of himself, stick knives in and — in this instrument's case — set ablaze during performances.

"Expanding the Band" explores the way the classic four-piece rock band was augmented by instruments like dulcimers, sitars and a range of experimental keyboards to expand the sound.

"Creating an Image" opens with an enormous, jagged electric piano housed in acrylic with built-in lights, owned by Lady Gaga. That section also includes Prince's "Love Symbol" guitar and a dragon-embroidered outfit once worn by Page.

A wall image of Springsteen taken from behind with his guitar over his shoulder illustrates how for some stars, the guitar became almost an extension of their body.

"Creating a Sound" explores the technical side of rock music, with the amps, guitars and rigs used by Page, Keith Richards, Van Halen and Tom Morello. Each of the four rigs is accompanied by a videotaped interview with the artist explaining how they created their unique sound.

The show ends with footage of some of rock's most iconic moments, along with decades of posters advertising groundbreaking concerts.

"Play It Loud: Instruments of Rock and Roll" is accompanied by a hefty and detailed catalog of the same name (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, distributed by Yale University Press, 2019).



A custom guitar played by Jerry Garcia of The Grateful Dead



Keith Emerson of Emerson, Lake and Palmer wedged knives in the keys of his Hammond organ to sustain notes.



This Gibson Les Paul was decorated by Keith Richards of The Rolling Stones.



Left: The Fender Stratocaster played by Jimi Hendrix at Woodstock in 1969.



The exhibit includes instruments used by members of the Beatles, who established the template for the rock 'n' roll band as we know it with their Feb. 9, 1964, appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" that kicked off the British Invasion.

WEEKEND: MUSIC REVIEWS



RO.LEXX/Courtesy of RCA Records

**Khalid**

Free Spirit (Right Hand Music/RCA)

Three years ago, Khalid was an El Paso, Texas, high school student who played his first show in a coffee shop. This summer, the Grammy-nominated, budding R&B superstar will headline arenas around the country.

His new album, "Free Spirit," shows exactly how that meteoric rise happened and why it is totally deserved. While it's long been commonplace for rockers to incorporate bits of R&B into their music, Khalid is one of a growing number of R&B artists drawing inspiration from indie rock.

Sometimes the influence is obvious, like on the brooding "Hundred," which sounds like he's singing over a long-lost Goth guitar line from The Cure, or "Outta My Head," which features John Mayer on guitar and backing vocals. The soaring title track also has the feel of early Mayer, although Khalid's falsetto gives it a more soulful twist. And there are elements of latter-day Prince in "Bluffin'" and the lush epic "Heaven."

However, Khalid fares far better when the scales are tipped more in the favor of R&B. The album's singles — the laid-back "Better" and the gorgeous, EDM-influenced "Talk," produced by Disclosure — currently sit at Nos. 1 and 2 on Billboard's R&B charts. The groove-driven "Right Back" should follow, along with the funky, loping "Paradise."

The genre trappings turn out to be beside the point on "Free Spirit." Khalid's vocals, from his lower register to sweet falsetto, warm up every song, and his detail-oriented, personal lyrics always draw the listener in.

"Daddy's gone, see he's never home," he sings in the simple, yet wrenching, "Saturday Nights." "And wishing only makes it worse."

With "Free Spirit," Khalid establishes himself as one of music's best new artists, following in the footsteps of Frank Ocean and Solange, but creating his own path up both the pop and R&B charts.

— Glenn Gamboa
Newsday**Luther Dickinson and Sisters of the Strawberry Moon**

Solstice (New West)

Some of the solo and parallel projects of North Mississippi Allstars guitarist-vocalist Luther Dickinson have been among his most fascinating work.

He continues that tradition on the diverse "Solstice," where his role as producer and musical matchmaker gives the spotlight to Sisters of the Strawberry Moon, a custom-made lineup that includes some longtime collaborators (Amy LaVere and Sharee Thomas), a Mississippi gospel trio (The Como Mamas), the husband-and-wife duo Birds of Chicago and Amy Helm.

Recorded at the Dickinson family's Zebra Ranch Studios in (where else?) Mississippi, "Solstice" has the kind of effortless quality that results from musicians collaborating on similar wavelengths.

Drummer and fife player (a family tradition) Thomas' two songs — "Fly With Me" and "We Made It" — are brief, optimistic and delightfully playful, while LaVere expertly reprises David Egan's "Hallelujah (I'm A Dreamer)" and kills softly with the romantic menace of her own "The Night Is Still Young."

Helm takes the lead on the soulful "Sing to Me" and a cover of "Like a Songbird That Has Fallen," from the "Cold Mountain" soundtrack.

The Como Mamas are a group in themselves, their acapella renditions carrying powerful messages — "Turn the light from heaven / On my soul / If you find anything that shouldn't be / Take it out / And straighten me."

Distinguished guests include Charles Hodges (from the Hi Records rhythm section) on Hammond B-3 organ, and guitarists Alvin Youngblood Hart and Will Sexton (LaVere's husband).

And Dickinson? He also plays guitars as the ladies perform, their voices blending and standing out with equal grace and emotion.

— Pablo Gorondi
Associated Press

Photos courtesy of New West Records

WEEKEND: LIFESTYLE

Dealing with Facebook disconnect

Changing habits could require a rethinking of what it means to keep in touch — beyond ‘likes’ and emojis

By MOLLY BAKER
Philly.com

The classic philosophical riddle is, “If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, does it make a sound?”

What if you post something on Facebook when no one is there to read it? Has the news really been shared?

Certainly, in the early days of Facebook, people uploaded vacation selfies, commented on pet photos and announced life changes with a status update, and the majority of American adults were there to see it — roughly 68 percent of them, according to a recent

Pew research study.

But Facebook is always changing. Like much of the internet, Facebook has more ads, more videos, more politics, more algorithms. For these and many other reasons, more people are deleting the app or at least decreasing their engagement with Facebook. And there’s the disconnect.

Liz Duffy of Radnor, Pa., recently used the site to let friends know her 92-year-old father had died. “It was

worth out to a lot of people quickly,” she says. “But there were people I would have heard from and didn’t. And that’s when I realized I never told them.”

On the other end, people who have scaled back their Facebook activity or deleted their accounts are often missing the “updates” that family and friends might have shared with them personally in the past.

Indeed, the days of spreading the news door to door of a new baby in the neighborhood, or using a phone chain to let the extended family know someone is in the hospital, are likely things of the past. For better or worse, the Facebook “status update” has become the de facto method for sharing news, with implications for how we interact with one another.

“It happens all the time,” says Tom Lowy of Wayne, Pa. “A relative on my in-laws’ side died and I didn’t know it. And my wife — who has a different friend than I do — said, ‘It was on Facebook.’”

According to a 2018 Pew research study, 74 percent of adult Facebook users in the U.S. changed their Facebook habits in the past 12 months — 42 percent say they have taken a break from checking the platform for several weeks or more;



JESSICA GRIFFIN, PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER/TNS

Liz Duffy, in her Radnor, Pa., home, posted on Facebook to let people know about the death of her 92-year-old father (pictured on her desk). Later she realized there were still many people who didn’t know.

26 percent say they have deleted the app from their phones; and 54 percent say they have changed their privacy settings on Facebook.

But more often, the assumption is that everyone is still on, and that everyone sees everything their friends post. Jabin White, a father of two in Villanova, Pa., who works in digital publishing, was a pretty heavy Facebook user when he joined 10 years ago, and he still has more than 600 “friends.” Some of his roommates from college were commenting back and forth when he noticed one of his closest friends wasn’t participating.

“I only noticed because we were busting his chops and he wasn’t defending himself,” he says. “I texted his wife, and she said he hadn’t been on Facebook in years. I was a little embarrassed how long it took me to notice.”

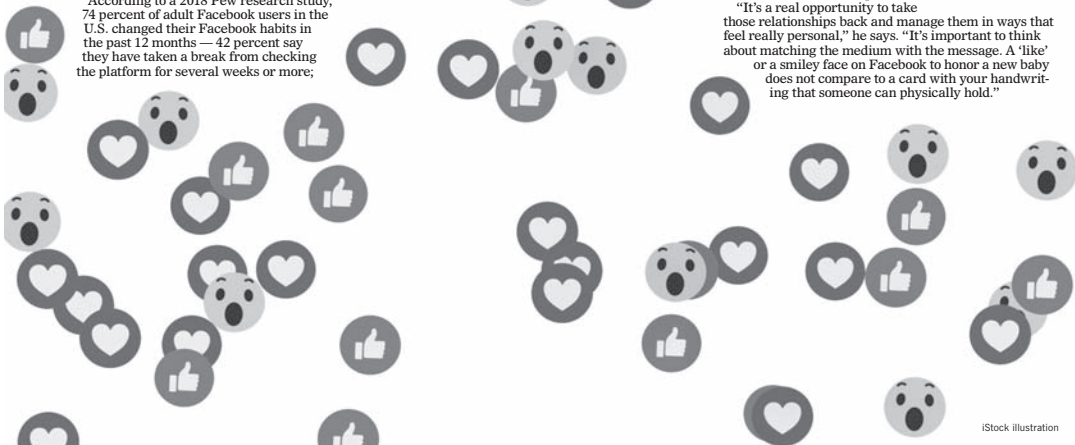
And it’s not just the missed messages that have White concerned. He worries about the effects of the technology itself.

“Facebook has changed the way we think about how we communicate with the world,” White says. “I probably communicate with people much less than I used to. And I don’t feel guilty about it, because Facebook is training my brain to think I’m keeping up with people just because I commented on their beach photo last summer.”

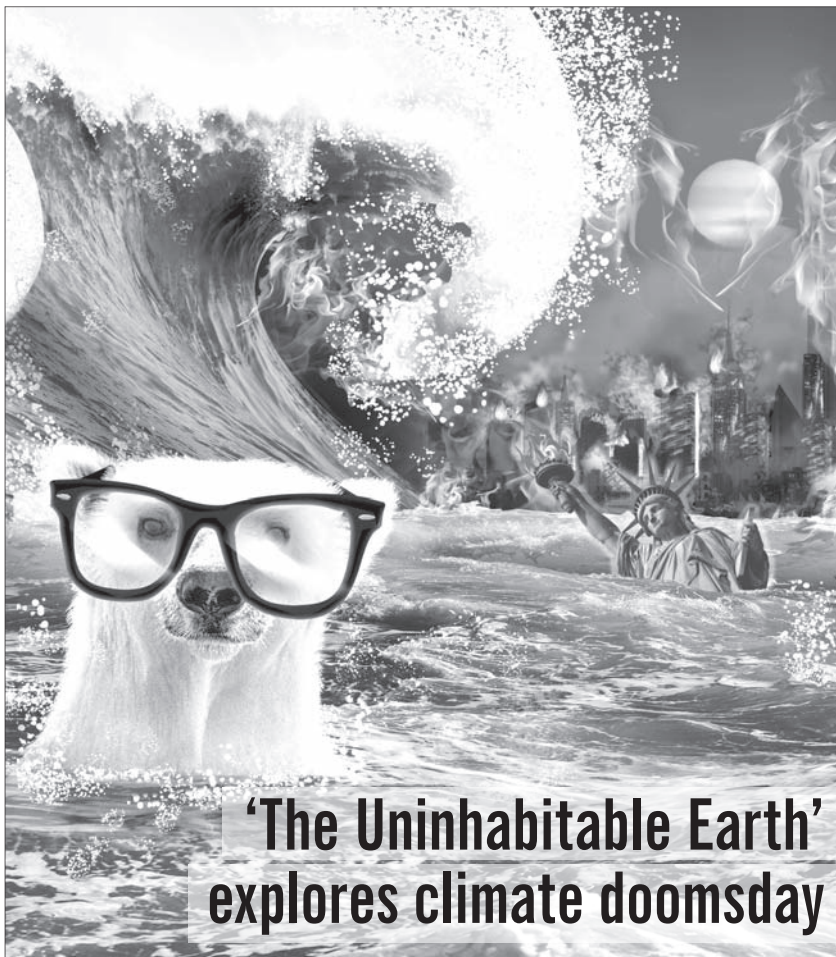
“We’re not communicating as human beings; we’re just broadcasting,” he says. “We are missing out on the work and rewards of responding to another in joy or grief. And the worst part is that we don’t realize we are missing out on it.”

Daniel Post Senning, spokesman for the etiquette guide the Emily Post Institute, encourages people to see today’s shifting engagement with social media as a moment to examine how we maintain relationships.

“It’s a real opportunity to take those relationships back and manage them in ways that feel really personal,” he says. “It’s important to think about matching the medium with the message. A ‘like’ or a smiley face on Facebook to honor a new baby does not compare to a card with your handwriting that someone can physically hold.”



WEEKEND: BOOKS



'The Uninhabitable Earth' explores climate doomsday

ILLUSTRATION BY BEV SCHILLING/Stars and Stripes

By KEVIN BEGOS
Associated Press

The science is clear: Massive fossil fuel use by humans is raising temperatures in the oceans and air, the seas are rising, and we aren't building nearly enough green energy to slow the process.

But does preaching global doom inspire change, or just resignation? The worth of "The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming" by David Wallace-Wells hinges on that question.

"The Uninhabitable Earth" originated as a long essay for New York magazine in 2017, and the book repeats the same formula. Wallace-Wells argues that it is past time to be very afraid about the devastation that humans and ecosystems will suffer.

Some scientists criticized the extreme tone of the magazine piece, but David

Archer, a respected climate expert at the University of Chicago, said then that Wallace-Wells "is not wrong, wildly misleading, or out of bounds of the discussion we should be having about climate change."

But if the book is justified in discussing worst-case scenarios, Wallace-Wells repeatedly confuses the message by bouncing between alarm and caution. There's the title, yet soon we're told that "it is unlikely that climate change will render the planet truly uninhabitable." He writes that the Syrian civil war was "inflamed by climate change and drought," but later adds that scientists say it is "not exactly fair to say the conflict is the result of warming."

Books should also have deeper narratives than magazine pieces, and "The Uninhabitable Earth" doesn't. Wallace-Wells speculates about climate doomsday from every possible angle, but says little about the tremendous global progress in reducing

wind or solar power costs. A single wonky chapter on the benefits, costs and challenges of bringing a green energy revolution to New York City would have been welcome, and timely. Generals motivate troops by searching for ways to win, not by telling everyone they are doomed to die.

The book suffers from unnecessary hyperbole, too. Wallace-Wells loses credibility with claims that "global warming has improbably compressed into two generations the entire story of human civilization" and that three or more degrees of warming "would unleash suffering beyond anything that humans have ever experienced through many millennia." One wonders where Wallace-Wells places the Bubonic plague and deaths from malaria, typhoid, AIDS, starvation, the Holocaust and the like.

Yet the time to slow climate change is running out, so perhaps the tone of "The Uninhabitable Earth" is a necessary response. If the book inspires a new generation of climate activists, more power to Wallace-Wells.

Eggers' 'The Parade' a heartbreaking work of staggering cynicism

Dave Eggers has spent much of his life figuring out how best to help people. He first gained widespread attention in 2000 with "A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius," an ironic memoir about dropping out of college to raise his little brother after their parents died. His first novel, "You Shall Know Our Velocity," was about a couple of friends tearing around the world trying to give away money. His other books have brought attention to the plight of teachers, wrongfully convicted prisoners and the Lost Boys of Sudan. Along the way, he founded 826 National, a literacy



organization for children. Given that record of active concern and service, what are we to make of his slight new novel, "The Parade," a

tale of Western assistance in the developing world?

The story opens in an unnamed country that has recently emerged from civil war. To reunify this broken land, an international company has been hired to build a 150-mile road connecting the rural south to the urban north. That job will be accomplished by one machine driven by one man, assisted by another man who drives ahead to keep the path clear. Completing the job is the whole plot of "The Parade."

The men are identified only by numbers. The driver of the giant paving machine is "Four," an experienced construction worker who holds strictly to every company policy. His partner, "Nine," is a cavalier novice who constantly wanders away to frolic with the people they pass.

It's tempting to think we've seen this buddy film before: the grumpy old crank who does everything by the book and the carefree heartthrob who drives him crazy. We know that the old guy will soften up, while the younger man will learn to respect his boss' wisdom.

These are not spoilers so much as the terms of the Buddy genre.

Which brings us to why this novel is missing. Eggers has pared his clever style down to a series of flat, declarative sentences. The characters have been crunched into types. The details of this place have been slandobladed away. At best, we're left with the stark elements of a parable, which raises the book's pretentiousness quotient to dangerously high levels.

But what's disappointing is the novel's final paragraph. If this parable offers any lesson, it's that Nine's delight was foolish, that efforts to help economic development are wasted, and that political reform will never work.

I don't read novels to have my fantasies of progress affirmed, but I don't read them to be told that hope is a cheat.

— Ron Charles
The Washington Post

WEEKEND: TELEVISION & DVD

NEW ON DVD

“On the Basis of Sex”: The film starts with Ruth Bader Ginsburg (Felicity Jones), one of only nine women in a class of 500 allowed to attend Harvard Law School in 1956 and goes through the landmark case that she and her husband (Armie Hammer, “Call Me by Your Name”) argued that became a turning point in women’s rights. Director Mimi Leder (“Shameless”) blends Ginsburg’s legal and family worlds into a beautifully presented package.

The film presents all the valuable facts and historical moments that made Ginsburg one of the most important women of the past century, but it also presents her life as both a legal drama and an endearing love story.

There’s a line in the film where a woman meeting Ginsburg says: “I thought she would be bigger.” Through smart writing and fearless acting, “On the Basis of Sex” shows that Ginsburg has been a giant in the legal world while also a wife and mother. That’s a story a larger audience than a documentary can attract needs to see.



Focus Features

Armie Hammer, left, plays Marty Ginsburg opposite Felicity Jones as Ruth Bader Ginsburg in “On the Basis of Sex.”

“The Browsing Effect”: You will neither swipe right nor left while watching this tale of dating in the time of social media. The stories of people searching for the right person walk a safe line when it comes to the joy and heartbreak such dating practices can create. The film has a few interesting characters, but overall there isn’t a big emotional moment.

Also available on DVD:

“Holmes and Watson”: Detective Sherlock Holmes (Will Ferrell) and Dr. Watson (John C. Reilly) are back on the case to investigate a murder at Buckingham Palace.

“A Dog’s Way Home”: Dog must travel 400 miles to be reunited with her family.

“Golden Job”: Group of former mercenaries reunites to plan an epic heist.

“Project Blue Book: Season 1”: College professor is recruited by the U.S. Air Force to spearhead an operation that investigates UFO sightings and alleged extraterrestrial encounters.

“Mrs. Wilson”: Ruth Wilson stars as her own grandmother in this true story of spies and a woman’s search for her husband’s real identity.

“The Charming”: Director Milad Alami’s thriller explores class, race and immigrant identity.

“The Legend of 7 Golden Vampires”: Professor Van Helsing (Peter Cushing) and Count Dracula (John Forbes-Robinson) meet again in the martial arts horror thriller set in the village of Ping Kuei.

“We Die Young”: Two boys trying to escape a world of drugs get help from a veteran (Jean-Claude Van Damme) with PTSD.

“Matriarch”: A stranded couple learn that the people who have taken them in are hiding a dark secret.

“Berlin I Love You”: Ten stories of compassion, redemption and acceptance are woven together.

“As You Like It”: Writer/director Carlyle Stewart tells William Shakespeare’s story that celebrates the enduring power of love in all its many disguises as a western.

—Rick Bentley/Tribune News Service



Filmmaker Jordan Peele is reviving “The Twilight Zone.” The classic TV program first premiered in the 1960s. The latest version of the show premieres on Wednesday on AFN-Spectrum.

CBS

Jordan Peele’s take plans to honor the original, but deliver a modern spin

By MICHAEL CAVNA
The Washington Post

The wall-spanning computers, thin spacesuits and caked makeup effects might look squarely of their Hollywood era, but the ‘60s aesthetic was never the point of “The Twilight Zone.” The science-fiction anthology series resonates as timeless because its mission was always about the human condition, tested by the whims and mysteries of the surreal.

Celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, Rod Serling’s original series is often cited as one of the best television shows ever, largely because it cloaked allegories about humankind’s deepest fears and sins beneath the lab coat of science-fiction tropes. As narrator and creator, Serling toyed with senses of time, space and perception, playing like a behavioral scientist with themes of power, nostalgia, social politics and prejudice. All that has proved immensely attractive to a team of 21st-century producers, who are reimagining the classic series for modern times. Led by filmmaker Jordan Peele, their vision for a revived “Twilight Zone” will debut Wednesday on AFN-Spectrum.

“We are living in an era that feels like an episode of ‘The Twilight Zone,’” says executive producer and director Simon Kinberg, who is also behind this year’s “The Dark Phoenix.”

“Every day, both nationally and internationally, things are happening that (seemingly) could only have been created by the mind of wry, ironic science fiction. ... The absurdity, the surreality, the sliding truth and fiction of today’s world just feels very much like a ‘Twilight Zone’ episode.”

To affirm the original show’s modern influence, simply look to Peele’s new horror hit, “Us,” which had made \$216 million worldwide through last weekend. For that film, Peele was inspired by the 1960 “Twilight Zone” episode “Mirror Image,” in which a female character eerily sees her doppelganger in a mirror and comes to believe that this evil double is trying to replace her.

CBS’ “Twilight Zone” revival similarly features original stories and characters, even as it pays homage with many Easter egg references to Serling’s series — honoring, as Kinberg says, “the spirit and the structure and the tonality of the original series.”

The producers, who are passionate fans of the original, needed to tackle two crucial questions to bring the revival to life: What about “The Twilight Zone” works in 2019 — and what most needed to be reworked?

“What we landed on was that in some very fundamental ways, ‘The Twilight Zone’ isn’t broken,” says Win Rosenfeld, an executive producer on the new show and the president of Peele’s Monkeypaw Productions.

What the new show’s creatives appreciated was that the original series’ craftsmanship — from story to performance — was so often impeccable. The original featured a wealth of established and future stars, including Robert Redford, Robert Duvall, Carol Burnett and much of the cast of a follow-up ‘60s sci-fi hit, “Star Trek.”

The reboot will spotlight a diverse array of talent, including Seth Rogen, John Cho, Sanaa Lathan, Adam Scott, Kumail Nanjiani, Lesley Mirza and Shalyn Ferdinand — with Peele stepping into Serling’s shoes as narrator.

There have been several revivals of “The Twilight Zone” since the original series ended in 1964 — as well as a 1983 feature film — but none has yet matched what is arguably the original’s greatest strength: innovative and textured storytelling.

Serling penned 92 of the series’ 156 scripts, which exposed stories culled from science fiction and genre fiction to the masses, Kinberg says, including from such talents as Charles Beaumont, Richard Matheson, Reginald Rose, Earl Hamner Jr., Ray Bradbury and George Clayton Johnson.

But the new show won’t rehash those same stories. “One thing Jordan and I had talked from the beginning of this process,” Kinberg says, “was about making something that would be a little disruptive.”

Kinberg says his meetings with Carol Serling, the show creator’s widow, only confirmed his belief that a revival needed to take creative license.

For the reimagining, he says, it became “almost a requirement to be bold and provocative rather than just do a karaoke version of something we all love.”

It was in line with Serling’s mission to tackle social themes, including war — he had seen action as a World War II paratrooper — and racism. “The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street” is an original episode that feels equally relevant today as a neighborhood is threatened by paranoia over fear of the other, its social glue proving a fragile adhesive.

At the moment, perhaps no filmmaker is better than Peele at addressing social issues through genre storytelling.

“Storytelling is an amazing mechanism (when) an issue’s too in-your-face,” says Kinberg, noting how Peele’s 2017 racial satire “Get Out” resonated with a broad audience.

The viewer can “see the world through the eyes of an African-American man being targeted. You can relate to those characters (and) find yourself inside someone’s life — living the issues in a different way.”

WEEKEND: HEALTH & FITNESS



iStock

WEIGHT BIAS

What we mean when we talk about obesity, why it matters, and what we can do about it

BY CARRIE DENNETT
Special to The Washington Post

Research has shown that weight bias can threaten people's physical and mental health, which makes it vital for the medical community to take special care when discussing obesity. Unfortunately, a recent report in the prestigious British medical journal, the *Lancet*, falls short. The report, which highlights the connections between obesity, malnutrition and climate change, is the result of a three-year effort involving 26 authors from 14 countries. While the authors criticize discrimination against individuals who have a body mass index (BMI) in the obese range, they do so in a way that reflects and perpetuates bias. That is troubling.

The authors point out that, "in most Western cultures, obesity is seen as a personal failing rather than a predictable consequence of normal people interacting with obesogenic environments." Seeing

obesity as a personal failing leads to weight bias, which manifests in numerous ways. Consider the dehumanizing, headless "butts and guts" images of larger bodies used in the media, and the stereotype that people in larger bodies are stupid, lazy, sloppy, unhappy and incompetent.

This bias not only creates barriers to higher education, jobs and promotions, studies show it leads heavier people to avoid seeking medical care. In one study, signs of cancer were written off as part of patients' obesity. When people in larger bodies — especially women — experience bias from their health-care providers, they are less likely to return to get regular preventive health care. That's a big problem.

The report then goes on to state that society should not discriminate against people with obesity because it is a "predictable consequence of normal people interacting with obesogenic environments." In other words: Don't discriminate against people with obesity, because they can't help it. They're diseased.

However, the reason society should not discriminate against people with obesity is because discriminating against people based on their appearance is wrong. People of all shapes, sizes, shades and abilities are worthy of respect and fair treatment.

It doesn't help that the authors blame obesity on poor diet quality, albeit because of the modern food environment. This perpetuates the myth that fat people are fat because they eat a lot of fast food and other ultra-processed foods. This is far from a universal truth.

Additionally, the report, "The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition and Climate Change" is awash in the same gloom-and-doom language used in almost every paper on obesity. In the first place, it refers to obesity as an epidemic (along with undernutrition and climate change, to be fair), invoking the "health and economic burdens caused by obesity." It even equates the economic costs of

COMMENTARY

obesity to the costs incurred by smoking or armed violence and war.

The report's discussion of undernutrition doesn't elicit those negative analogies, even though its estimated costs are far greater, which raises a question: Why don't we constantly hear about "the undernutrition epidemic" or "the war on undernutrition"?

As with most health professionals who seek to avoid contributing to weight stigma, the authors use person-first language, pointing out that "an obese person" is an identity that suggests personal responsibility (again, unfairly, because many factors determine body weight), whereas "a person with obesity" is a person with a disease.

Trouble is, person-first language ignores that the word "obesity" is loaded with stigma no matter how you use it in a sentence. This is despite — or perhaps because of — the American Medical Association's 2013 decision to classify obesity as a disease, going against the recommendations of its Council on Science and Public Health. Today, to be a "person with obesity" is to be seen as diseased, regardless of overall health status and health-related behaviors. The word "obese" is wielded as both an amateur diagnosis and a weapon, designed to shame, silence and dehumanize. Check out the comments on any Instagram photo of a so-called woman with obesity, even if she's exercising.

We need a new approach. This new strategy, however, should not involve just trying to come up with other, less-stigmatizing ways to say "person with obesity" or "obesity epidemic" (in the case of the latter, we should just stop saying it at all). Instead, we should focus on public policies that make it easier for everyone to find and afford nutritional foods, live in a safe and healthy environment, eat well-balanced meals and be physically active. This will promote well-being for all people, regardless of their weight — especially if we are also willing to examine and challenge our own stereotypes and biases. Then, maybe we can leave the obsessive fixation on weight — which is not a behavior — in the rearview mirror.

WEEKEND: FAMILY

ILLUSTRATION BY
ANDREA VILLARI
Stars and Stripes

Closing the Bank of Mom and Dad

By LAURA DAILY
Special to The Washington Post

Being a grown-up is hard. Being a financially independent grown-up is harder. Our children must take on a lot when they reach adulthood: rent, food, transportation, insurance, not to mention staying connected (cellphone, cable and/or WiFi) and perhaps student loans. It's a challenge for most of them. In a 2014 poll conducted by the Pew Research Center, 65 percent of U.S. adults between the ages of 18 and 29 said they had received financial help from a parent in the preceding 12 months.

You want to help, but you also want them to stand on their own. The trick: weaning. Instead of pivoting from paying for everything to paying for nothing, you should methodically transition your child to financial independence.

"If you have the means, there's a lot of benefit to helping your child achieve financial independence, but you have to be strategic," says Bobbi Rebell, a certified financial planner and author of "How To Be A Financial Grownup." A University of Arizona study found that higher parental expectations and a well-grounded financial education promote a more successful shift to young adulthood.

If you're ready to transition your soon-to-be-adult offspring to financial autonomy, here are some tips for getting started.

Start early. Children can grasp basic money skills as early as middle school. Leslie Tayne, a financial attorney concentrating in consumer debt, says to tell the kiddos that if they want a video game or to go to a concert with friends, they need to save their money and pay for it themselves. This helps instill a level of independence early on. When Tayne's twins reached driving age, she provided the car and paid the insurance, but told them they'd have to pay for the gas. "They quickly realized that it was going to cost them to take joyrides with their friends or drive across town," she says.

Seize the moments. Use any question about money — first paycheck, first car, first chunk of cash as a gift — to jump-start a conversation. **Have them teach you.** It's important kids understand how finances work, and what they hear from friends might be just plain wrong. Ask them to explain the difference between a credit card and a debit card, or collision vs. comprehensive car insurance. If they don't understand or are way off the mark, give them the facts or send them links to articles or websites with accurate information.

Create an exit strategy. If you subsidize your child's rent, consider paying 50 percent the first year, 25 percent the second year and zero in year three. At that point, they

might need to get a roommate or downsize, but ultimately the onus will be on your child to find the solution. Sometimes, an end point is self-evident, as in the case of health insurance: Under current law in most states, you can keep a child on your policy until they turn 26.

Give them choices. Empowerment is key to financial independence. Cede some control over decisions and finances. Say, "I can help you with this or that. Which would you like me to cover?"

Consider an adult allowance. It might make more sense to provide a monthly lump sum rather than contributing to specific expenses. "A fixed amount invites positive behaviors and encourages your child to budget," says Chicago-based Kelley Long, a certified public accountant and financial wellness coach. If, for example, you are giving \$1,000 monthly toward rent and your child finds an apartment for \$900 a month, then they will have extra cash. If the apartment they love costs \$2,000, they will have to find more money elsewhere.

Celebrate the positive. If your child receives a raise, offer hearty congratulations. Don't penalize them for success by immediately demanding they chip in more. Instead try, "I'm so proud of you. Have you given any thought as to

how to transition to some additional expenses you'd like to take on?"

Share your mistakes. We've all experienced some financial mishap — bouncing a check, underestimating a monthly bill, buying that non-returnable lamp we loved until we got it home. Sit down with your kids and explain how you goofed. Ask what they would have done.

Consider family an ecosystem. It's not unreasonable to have your child on the family cellphone plan, but have them chip in proportionally. The same holds true for auto insurance. If you can get a better deal on your plan (multiple vehicles usually garner a discount), have them pay their share. But don't just pick up the bills. Have your child cover their co-pays and file the paperwork.

Stash the cash. Even if you have the means to subsidize every bill, have your child contribute their share, Long says. If that makes you uncomfortable, consider depositing their payments into a special account they can tap into at a future date, such as an emergency fund, for a down payment for a home or even a Roth IRA.

Keep the door ajar. Experts agree that even when young adults achieve financial independence, it's important to reassure them that they can always call you for advice or help.

THE MEAT AND POTATOES OF LIFE

Lisa Smith Molinari



My new car treats me like an idiot

“Your fuel level is low. Would you like to navigate to the nearest gas station?” an unfamiliar male voice called out. I glanced at the other seats in my new car, but I was entirely alone. Then I saw the words displayed across my vehicle's digital screen.

My car was talking to me. More specifically, it was passively-aggressively telling me what to do. It was the first time it had asked me a direct question since I bought the car back in January. But I wasn't surprised. In the past few months, I had learned that my new car most certainly believed it was smarter than I am.

Ever since we made the \$400 trade-in on our 2005 minivan with 240,000 miles on her odometer, I had been driving around in the veritable lap of luxury. My new SUV was better, cleaner, faster and cooler than my old minivan was in every way. However, my new car brought new problems.

When I drove my old minivan, I was the superior one. Aside from complicated mechanics, which I left up to qualified automobile repair shops to deal with, I controlled everything in that vehicle. Having put most of her 240,000 miles on her herself, I knew exactly how to manually adjust the sound system (with its handy-dandy tape deck), the heat and AC, the seat positions, the headlights, the doors and all other systems. There was no digital display, no voice recognition feature, no navigation system, no Bluetooth capability, no automatic doors, no heated steering wheel, no keyless start, no camera system.

She was not hands-free, but rather, totally hands-on. During these meager minivan years, I was a modern-day Robinson Crusoe. My minivan was my primitive island, and I was forced to make do. Like Crusoe, "I had nothing to covet, for I had all that I was now capable of enjoying; I was Lord of the whole Manor ... I learned to look more upon the bright side of my condition, and less upon the dark side, and to consider what I enjoyed, rather than what I wanted."

I didn't complain that the van's carpets were tainted with years worth of spilled juice boxes and kids' up-chuck. I just spritzed them with Febreze and carried on. I didn't gripe when the roof sprouted a leak; I just covered it with duct tape. I didn't demand a new car when the door handle fell off; I just got on to the other side.

Through ingenuity and self-reliance, I became the Master of my minivan's Domain. The Lady of the Manor. The Queen of the Castle.

But now I drive a German-engineered vehicle with complicated digital systems that did not exist when my old minivan was manufactured back in 2005. My new car senses my confusion and takes control, as if I am a complete idiot.

It recognizes my voice, detects my phone, knows everyone in my contact list, turns on my Audible book to the page where I left off, adjusts my seat to my pre-set specifications, warns me that the gas is too low, and offers to find the nearest gas station. It controls the climate inside the car for me, heats my steering wheel and my seat, and knows exactly when a little defrost is needed to avoid fogging up the windows. It even turns my lights and wipers on when they are needed, and turns them off when they are not.

Despite all this newfangled automation, I still look back after parking the car and wonder, "Is it really going to turn the lights out for me? What if it doesn't, and the battery goes dead?" Until I learn to trust machines, I'll wait out in the cold until the lights blink out, just to make sure.

My new car has made it painfully clear that I am unqualified to operate its advanced systems. I wouldn't be surprised if it snapped at me, "Eh-Eh! Don't touch! Let me handle it so you don't screw anything up." Although I don't want my minivan back, I sometimes yearn for the empowerment I felt when I was Master of my Domain.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoffice.com
Email: meatandpotatoesoffice@googlemail.com

WEEKEND: CROSSWORD AND COMICS

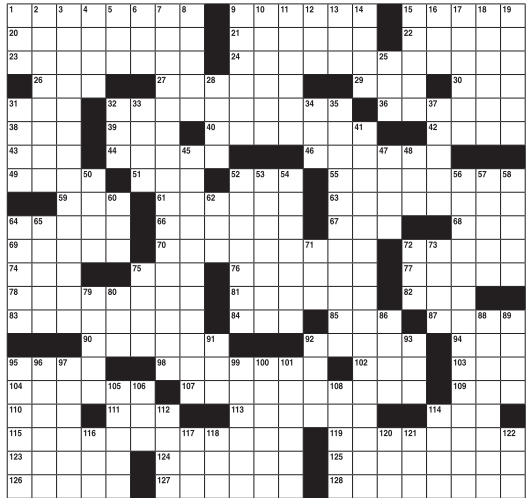
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

HELP!

BY PETER A. COLLINS / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Peter A. Collins is the chairman of the math department at Huron High School, in Ann Arbor, Mich., where he has been teaching for 39 years. He has been creating crosswords for The Times since 2006. This is his 108th. When he can, Peter likes to incorporate some of the black squares into his puzzle themes, as he ingeniously does here. —W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 It might end up in a sack
9 E neighbor
15 Nada
20 Robots
21 "Not exactly, but close ..."
22 Filmmaker Coen
23 Checkout devices
24 Tired tale
26 Seriously annoy
27 Roll out, as a flag
29 Stuff in a muffin, say?
30 Neighbor of Okla.
31 Exciting, in modern lingo
32 Rock, maybe
36 Danson's "Cheers" role
38 End of some hybrid dog breed names
39 N.Y.C. dance company
40 Hounds
42 Tidbits for aardvarks
43 Bearded beast
44 They go with potatoes in soup
46 Sting operator
49 Regarding
51 Vitamin stat
52 Hosts, in brief
55 Italian cheese
- 59 Peel place
61 Out at a library, say
63 "Yeah, why not?"
64 Cyrus who sang the 2013 No. 1 hit "Weeping Ball"
66 Once did this puzzle
67 States, informally
68 Be prone
69 Radiated
70 Leafy salad ingredient
72 Didn't delay job
74 Unexperienced
75 Fool
76 Something frequently found in pink lipstick
77 Poppi's location
78 Stabilizes with a heavy load
81 Lump in the throat
82 Geologic period
83 Get upset over
84 Lincoln-to-Madison dir.
85 Sunrise direction, in Stuttgart
87 River in a 1914 battle
90 Skim
92 Not a science, but ____
- 94 & 95 What often seems to disappear in a cycle
98 N.C. military installation
102 ____ Trois Mousquetaires"
103 Big do
- 104 Appealed to a higher authority?
107 Religious time in spring
109 Critical message that's a hint to the six longest entries in this puzzle
110 Circular components?
111 Cave dweller
113 Caruso and Pavarotti
114 It makes for a boring job
115 1973 Beach Boys song
119 "Three Stooges" insult
123 Sal of "Rebel Without a Cause"
124 Course of action
125 Stretched tight
126 Caribbean game fish
127 Changes back to 0000
128 Swollen
- 9 State of abandonment
10 Traffic troubles
11 Where the phrase "To thin one's self be true" comes from
12 What shocked people stand in
13 Raja ____ Indian author of "The Serpent and the Rope"
14 Ernie ____ Pulitzer-winning journalist of W.W. II
15 Keebler cracker brand
16 Member of TV's Addams Family
17 Something scientists make light of?
18 Rear
19 Some cameo stones
25 Obstacle for a fish
28 Dandies
31 Tour grp.
32 Bro
33 Cab alternative
34 Common Market org.
35 Starting point in logic
37 Swimmers' assignments
41 Slippery vendor
45 The Wildcats of the N.C.A.A.
47 Jason with the 2008 hit "I'm Yours"
48 Poet Lowell
50 Store window sign
52 Dress seller
53 Take root
- DOWN**
- 1 Ballet step
2 They have lots for sale
3 Not exactly hit the ground running
4 PlayStation company
5 L.B.J. follower
6 Home of the Burj Khalifa: Abbr.
7 Showed "em what we've got
8 "It ____ hit me yet"



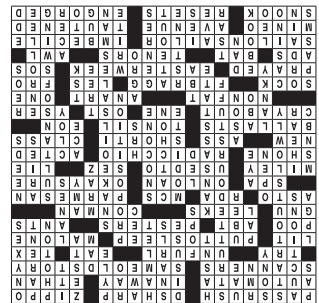
- 54 Sweet summer treat
56 1978 Dire Straits hit
57 The Ram
58 Doesn't just want
60 Word said in passing?
62 Headed up
64 "Morning Joe" airer
65 Rumor starter
71 Timecard abbr.
72 Prized pitcher
73 Please too much
- 75 "Unto us ____ is given"
79 Like a string bean
80 Blood-tying letters
86 Word with bay or family
88 Course registrant
89 Cars that disappeared during the Depression
91 "Don't know yet," on a schedule
92 Prefix with industry
- 93 Bit of shaming
95 Involuntary actions
96 Make official
97 House of cards?
99 "Wheel of Fortune" sextet
100 Eschewed home cooking
101 Mystery and romance, for two
105 Download for a tablet
- 106 Skilled judoist
108 Draft
112 Nicholas II was the last one
114 Big name in laptops
116 The Lion
117 ____ Imperator!
118 "-y" pluralizer
120 Irk
121 W.W. II arena: Abbr.
122 Baseball Hall-of-Famer Roush

GUNSTON STREET



"Gunston Street" is drawn by Basil Zaviski. Email him at gunstonstreet@yahoo.com. Online: gunstonstreet.com.

RESULTS FOR ABOVE PUZZLE



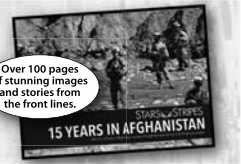
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FACES



Getting race right

Score one for Hollywood as 'Hellboy' recasts Asian role with Daniel Dae Kim

BY GENE PARK
The Washington Post

Daniel Dae Kim is going to be one of the first Asian superheroes on the big screen. And he had to find the man who made it possible.

Kim plays grizzled military man Captain Ben Daimio in the new "Hellboy" reboot. But the "Lost" actor wasn't the first choice for Daimio in the film, which comes out stateside April 12.

Ed Skrein, a white British actor, was tapped to play the role on Aug. 21, 2017. But Daimio was originally written in the comics as a man of mixed Asian heritage. Just a week later, Skrein announced on Twitter that he had been "unaware" of the character's background and that he "must do what I feel is right," and stepped down. Producer Lloyd Levin also acknowledged the initial casting was a "mistake," and that when they saw Kim on the list of possible replacements, "we went pretty much directly to him."

"What he did meant so much to me personally, and more importantly on a cultural level," Kim said of Skrein.

Kim accepted the gig as Daimio, and asked the producers for Skrein's contact informa-

tion so he could thank him.

"Within 10 minutes of our conversation, I knew how genuine he was, and that he had written that statement," Kim said. "It meant a lot to me to talk to him in detail about where his heart is and what he meant by it."

Kim has been on the other end of fighting for representation, stepping down from his role in the CBS show "Hawaii Five-0" along with co-star Grace Park, after it was reported they were seeking more equitable pay but failed to reach a contract. Kim said Skrein has deep empathy for actors of color.

"The issue bonded us immediately," Kim said. "I'm happy to say we've seen each other a few times since then, and I genuinely call him a friend. It's one thing for actors of color to be fighting for diversity. It's much more meaningful when people of other races think about this issue. That's when real change happens."

Skrein's actions were notable in light of how other players have fumbled similar whitewashing incidents, such as Tilda Swinton suggesting the anger at her role in Marvel's "Dr. Strange" was residual of other offenses like Scarlett Johansson's role in the Japanese tale "Ghost in the Shell."

Daniel Dae Kim plays a field team commander for the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense in the upcoming "Hellboy" reboot.

Lionsgate



Chip and Joanna Gaines

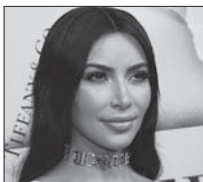
Discovery says more Gaines coming in 2020

The lifestyle team of Chip and Joanna Gaines will launch their own Discovery-affiliated television network in the summer of 2020.

Discovery CEO David Zaslav announced the as-yet-unnamed Gaines channel Wednesday. It will replace the current DIY network, which is seen in about 52 million homes in the United States.

No programming was revealed, except for reruns of "Fixer Upper," the HGTV series that launched the Gaines' media career. Discovery said topics will include community, home, garden, food and wellness.

Allison Page, who currently runs HGTV, will be president of the joint venture between Discovery and Magnolia, the Gaines' company. There are also plans for a dedicated app and subscription streaming service.



Kim Kardashian West

Kardashian West hopes to take the bar exam

Kim Kardashian West, a lawyer?

The reality star, makeup mogul and criminal justice reformer told Vogue she's apprenticing with a San Francisco law firm, inspired by her successful effort to free Alice Marie Johnson (Johnson was granted clemency by President Donald Trump after spending years in prison for drug trafficking).

Turns out that in four U.S. states, California included, one doesn't need to attend law school to take the bar exam.

Her goal is to take the bar in 2022.

What's the hardest part? Torts, said the daughter of the late O.J. Simpson defense attorney Robert Kardashian. She said torts is the most confusing, contract law the most boring and criminal law, "I can do in my sleep."



Lena Dunham

Dunham celebrates first year of sobriety

Lena Dunham is celebrating one year of sobriety.

The 32-year-old actress shared her milestone in an Instagram post Wednesday with a photo of her flashing a thumbs-up.

The "Girls" creator revealed she was missing prescription drugs during a Dax Shepard podcast in October.

Dunham writes she didn't know she had an issue with drugs for a long time because they were prescribed by a doctor, she was outwardly successful and she was not a wild partyer.

She says the community of other people in recovery has brought her "peace, joy and lasting connections."

She encouraged others struggling with addiction to persevere and ask for help, reminding them "you are never too far gone."

From The Associated Press

Billboard Music selects Carey for its Icon Award

Associated Press

No artist has more No. 1 hits on the Billboard Hot 100 chart than Mariah Carey, so it's only fitting that the singer will receive the Icon Award at the 2019 Billboard Music Awards.

NBC and Dick Clark Productions announced Thursday that the Grammy-winning superstar will also perform at the May 1 event in Las Vegas.

Carey has 18 No. 1 hits, including "Vision of Love," "Hero," "Honey" and "We Belong Together."

Her duet with Boyz II Men, "One Sweet Day," spent 16 weeks at No. 1, making it the longest-running No. 1 hit on the Hot 100 chart. Luis Fonsi's "Despacito" tied the feat in 2017.

Kelly Clarkson will host the Billboard Awards, and Panic at the Disco, Sam Smith and Nori-mani will perform. Cardi B is the leader with 21 nominations.

Geoffrey Rush wins case against publisher

Oscar-winning actor Geoffrey Rush won his defamation case on Thursday against a Sydney newspaper publisher and journalist over reports he had been accused

of inappropriate behavior toward an actress.

The 67-year-old Australian had sued The Daily Telegraph's publisher and journalist Jonathan Moran over two stories and a poster published in late 2017.

Australian Federal Court Justice Michael Wigney ruled that Rush had been defamed. Wigney awarded an initial payment of \$50,000 Australian dollars (\$610,000) in damages, but lawyers will return to court on May 10 when the judge determines damages for economic loss and costs.

The reports alleged inappropriate behavior toward co-star Eryn Jean Norvill by Rush while he was starring in the Sydney Theatre Company's production of "King Lear" in 2015 and 2016.

Other news

■ Country musician Earl Thomas Conley died Wednesday in Nashville due to an extended illness. He was 77. The music website allmusic.com says Conley charted his first Top 40 hit in 1979 with "Dreamin' All I Do." He sang a number of other hits, including "Holding Her and Loving You," "Right From the Start" and "What I'd Say."

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Stars and Stripes (USPS 0417900) is published weekly (except Dec. 25 and Jan. 1) for 50 cents Monday through Thursday and for \$1 on Friday by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AF 96301-5002. Periodicals postage paid at San Francisco, CA. Postmaster: Send address changes to Pacific Stars and Stripes, Unit 45002, APO AF 96301-5002.

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OPINION

Mar-a-Lago, counterintelligence nightmare

By ALI SOUFAN

Special to The Washington Post

Imagine that the White House, instead of a fortress, were an opulent country club. If you pony up a \$200,000 nonrefundable initiation fee, you can have the run of the place. Wander the halls. Drop in any time on the West Wing, the Oval Office, the Situation Room. Chat freely with the president's family and advisers, listen in on national security conversations with foreign leaders, even snap a selfie with POTUS himself. Take it all in — actually, feel free to record it if you like.

Welcome to the Mar-a-Lago club, known in President Donald Trump circles as the winter White House, in Palm Beach, Fla. When Yuning Zhang, a 32-year-old Chinese national, was arrested there March 30 after breaching security, it was hardly surprising to learn from federal law enforcement authorities that she was in possession of five cellphone SIM cards, an external hard drive, nine USB thumb drives (one with malicious computer software installed) and a device for detecting electronic signals. Zhang, who has not entered a plea yet, is charged with lying to a federal agent and illegal entering. The FBI is investigating whether she is a spy for China.

My personal experience as a counterterrorism agent tells me that Zhang's alleged laptop is consistent with an effort to monitor computer systems while evading surveillance.

Unfortunately, Mar-a-Lago appears wide open to such operations. Zhang's arrest is only the latest in a string of indications that the club is far from secure. Mar-a-Lago may present the worst counterintelligence nightmare the country has faced since the Cold War.

Concerns began barely three weeks into

the Trump presidency, when the president took a briefing on a North Korean missile test while sitting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the club's packed terrace; other guests promptly used their phones to snap photos of the event for their social media feeds. That could not have happened at the White House, not even during a state banquet, because visitors are not allowed to take their devices in. At Mar-a-Lago and other Trump resorts, there is no such restriction; indeed, according to federal prosecutors, Zhang's interesting taste for electronics included carrying four cellphones on her person.

Experts regularly raise concerns about the president's apparent use of an unsecured iPhone, and with good reason: A competent intelligence operation can turn any consumer cellphone into a trove of information about its user — or into a live bug for listening in on its owner's conversations.

If even Trump's own devices are not immune to hackers, what of those employed by the informal advisers with whom he regularly huddles at his various estates? ProPublica has reported that a group of three Mar-a-Lago members — a businessman, a doctor and a lawyer — exercise huge sway over decision-making regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs. How secure are their devices and the devices of other advisers with influence on other matters?

For that matter, how secure is the Mar-a-Lago wireless network used by the club's influential members and guests, many of them friends of the president? What about the club staff's computers? It is perhaps telling that one Mar-a-Lago visitor was reportedly able to gain sufficient access to the staff computer system to change its screen saver to an obscene message about

the president.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was quick to describe Zhang's arrest as an indication of "the threat that China poses," strongly suggesting that the State Department suspects her of spying. Yet Chinese influence-peddlers, some of them with unabashed connections to the Communist Party, continue to sell invitations to Mar-a-Lago online with impunity. And no wonder, given the lax security there. The Secret Service can operate checkpoints and try to monitor visitors, but Mar-a-Lago isn't Camp David; it's a venue rented out for wedding parties in the Donald J. Trump Grand Ballroom.

Whether or not Zhang is ultimately charged with espionage, one thing is clear: Every hostile intelligence service worthy of the name must have eyes and ears at Mar-a-Lago and other Trump resorts. Take it from an intelligence veteran: If Vladimir Putin ran his dachas as open-access country clubs, any U.S. president would expect this country's intelligence agencies to be running assets there.

Trump is, of course, entitled to discuss policy with whomever he pleases; as president, he is the ultimate declassification authority. But, as with his freewheeling personal Twitter account, the administration is trying to have it both ways: insisting that the winter White House is as good as the official version in terms of prestige and symbolism, yet less than official in terms of vetting and security.

For the safety of the United States' secrets, and of the president himself, a comprehensive review of Trump's unique way of working, and its counterintelligence implications, is urgently needed.

Ali Soufan, a former FBI counterterrorism agent, is a private sector consultant and the author of "Anatomy of Terror."

Don't let rising seas drown the Marshall Islands

By HILDA HEINE

AND PATRICK VERKOOIJEN

Special to The Washington Post

The Marshall Islands and other atoll countries in the Pacific will be the first nations to face extinction as a result of global warming. Rising sea levels could wipe them off the map in a matter of decades. Endless floods will make them uninhabitable even sooner. But, for purely selfish reasons, the world should not let them drown; the Marshall Islands have much to teach us about adapting to climate change.

This is not a crisis affecting a few far-flung coral atolls and reefs. We should care about what happens to the nearly 55,000 Marshallese because a further 800 million people in hundreds of low-lying coastal cities throughout the world are in imminent danger of a similar fate.

If the Marshall Islands cannot be saved, how will others manage? By the year 2050, up to 1 billion people — about 10 percent of the world's projected population — could become climate change refugees because of rising ocean levels, according to the United Nations. If only for this reason, the world should not let the Marshall Islands drown.

Just as the Marshall Plan after World War II helped war-ravaged nations rebuild themselves, we need a new Marshall Plan to deliver measures that ensure communities at ground zero of the global climate crisis can adapt and persevere. With sea level rise projected to accelerate, and with a high likelihood of rising by more than

one foot by 2050, if we do not live in coastal communities we will likely be welcoming migrants from them. We are all Marshall-ese now.

There is little time to lose. Already, radioactive chemicals such as plutonium are threatening to leak into one of the Marshall Islands' atolls because rising seawater has penetrated a nuclear waste cemetery. Water laps the front step of many Marshall-ese homes. More frequent inundation and flooding events are already occurring. The situation is extraordinarily fragile.

Determined to act before it's too late, the Marshall Islands are transforming their vessels into a real-life laboratory for preparing for the effects of climate change. They are building sea walls, designing large coastal protection systems, integrating adaptation and resilience into national plans, and expanding capacity to store rainwater in both urban and rural communities. Planners are also exploring the possibility of raising new islands to physically increase the landmass above water.

The Marshall Islands and the Netherlands are far apart, but they are both low-lying territories that have learned to live with water. The Dutch have mastered land reclamation over centuries.

But a sustainable plan of flood risk protection and fresh water supply takes commitment and substantial financial resources that go far beyond what is possible for a country ranked as one of the smallest economies in the world by the International Monetary Fund. The Netherlands, which saw 250,000 people evacuated in the 1990s because of flooding, is spending around

\$19.2 billion by 2031 to make the country safe for generations to come. Measures include the construction of dikes, permanent sand dunes, water-resistant buildings on stilts and floating structures that rise with water levels.

Some of the world can also help by accelerating adaptation strategies. Globally, each and every investment must be screened for its climate impact. New infrastructure that is not climate-proofed in its design is a liability. Existing technologies, such as climate-proofing buildings, safeguarding drinkable water through conservation, recycling and building new reservoirs, should be scaled up. We must move rapidly to make use of innovations such as new saline-tolerant crop plants and satellites that can spot planet-warming methane leaks.

Once again, the countries that did the least to cause climate change are suffering the most. Even so, and without the resources of the richer world, the Marshall Islands is taking the lead on global adaptation efforts against rising sea levels. In recognition of its endeavors, the small island nation chairs the Climate Vulnerable Forum, a group of 48 countries on the front line of climate change.

The Marshall Islands offer a warning of things to come, but also a beacon of hope for coastal communities all over the world. The actions we take now will determine which of those futures awaits us.

Hilda Heine is president of the Marshall Islands and chairs the Climate Vulnerable Forum. Patrick Verkoijen is chief executive of the Global Center on Adaptation and Managing Partner of the Climate Vulnerable Forum.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

Nielsen's departure not only red flag at Homeland Security

The announcement that Kirstjen Nielsen was stepping down as secretary of homeland security was sudden, but it wasn't really a surprise. Never a favorite of President Donald Trump, her days became numbered when her patron in the administration, Chief of Staff John Kelly, resigned in December. Nielsen was the biggest name in the eyes of the president and those who surround him was that she failed to stop the steady stream of migrants from moving northward from Central America. Nothing, it seems, perturbs the president more than desperate people seeking sanctuary in the United States.

Her departure should be welcomed. Nielsen oversaw the draconian separation of thousands of migrant children from their families in a nasty and unsuccessful effort to deter others who might seek asylum. That was a policy so vile and destructive that even Nielsen, who once shamed, was eventually shamed into ending it.

In general, there were few significant public differences between Nielsen and Trump on immigration enforcement, the part of Homeland Security that matters the most to the president. For instance, Nielsen once said that even though the program for asylum-seekers is "long and painful," the process in Mexico—a policy struck down by a federal judge on Monday because the administration failed to follow federal law in crafting the new policy.

Yet the president held Nielsen responsible for the abject failures of his self-defeating policies, which have done little to address the reasons behind the increase in asylum applications from families fleeing violence and poverty in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. The rising number of asylum-seekers is a complex problem, to be sure, and its predecessor issue—the arrival at the border of tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors, beginning in 2014—vexed the Obama administration. But Trump, who has ranted for years about immigration enforcement, has found no workable solutions either, beyond trying to stop people from exercising their legal right to seek asylum.

Nielsen's resignation also is part of a sweeping purge of top leaders in the agencies charged with enforcing immigration laws that, according to reports out of Washington, has been orchestrated by top White House adviser Stephen Miller. Among the most vocal immigration voices in Trump's ear, Miller has recently assumed more responsibility over immigration policy and homeland security. Late last week Trump withdrew the nomination of Ronald Vitiello as director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, saying he wanted to go in an unspecified "tougher" direction. One of what he has done is to fire Customs and Border Protection division, to be acting

These personnel moves are likely to add even more instability and uncertainty to the nation's immigration enforcement apparatus. Trump on Sunday named Kevin McAleenan, head of the Customs and Border Protection division, to be acting



MARK MITCHELL, NEW ZEALAND HERALD/AP

New Zealand Governor General Patsy Reddy, left, assisted by Deputy Clerk of the House Suze Jones in Wellington on Thursday, signs into effect sweeping gun laws outlawing military-style weapons. The move came less than a month after a man used such guns to kill 50 people and wound dozens at two mosques in Christchurch.

DHS secretary, which means his current job will likely have to be done by another fill-in appointment. To sum up: Trump now has acting top executives in charge of Homeland Security and two of its top immigration enforcement arms—ICE (mostly handling enforcement in the nation's interior) and Customs and Border Patrol (which handles enforcement at the border). And there are reports that the head of U.S. Customs and Immigration Services, Lee Francis Cisna, may also be targeted by Miller. This is government by chaos.

Meanwhile, the migrants continue to arrive, as many as 100,000 in March, according to the government's numbers. Trump's detention policies and his failure to sufficiently expand the immigration court system to handle the increased demand are yet more evidence that neither the president nor his appointees know how to run the government. The president should work with Congress to finally adopt comprehensive immigration reform, craft informed policies to help stabilize the countries the migrants are fleeing, assess current asylum laws to see if they need changes, and prompt an overdue discussion of what the shape of future immigration should be. Instead, Trump throws a tantrum.

New Zealand showed swift response on guns is possible

The Washington Post
Fifty victims. Twenty-six days. That—along with common-sense leadership from government officials—is what it took for New Zealand to pass a law that bans most semiautomatic weapons in the country. The contrast with the United States is both inescapable and striking. Despite the loss of far more lives in far more mass shootings—more than 2,000 mass shootings since the slaughter of elementary school children in Newtown, Conn., in 2012—Congress has refused to make any significant change in federal gun law, including needed reimposition of the ban on the assault rifle that was the weapon of choice of mass murderers.

"I can recall very vividly the moment I knew that we would need to be here, doing what we are doing right now," New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said Wednesday as Parliament voted to outlaw assault rifles. Attacks on two mosques in Christchurch by a white nationalist on March 15 had killed 50 people and, she said, "I could not fathom how weapons that could cause such destruction and large-scale death could have been obtained legally in this country." She put a temporary ban in place just days after the terrorist

killings. Legislation to make the ban permanent and authorize a buy-back of the banned weapons moved swiftly through Parliament, passing with the support of all but one of the 120 lawmakers.

New Zealand's form of government makes it easier for the ruling party to pass legislation. There also is no constitutional right to own guns as exists in the United States with the Second Amendment. But the most significant difference between the two countries—even as the vast majority of Americans favor sensible gun laws—is the outside and malign influence of the National Rifle Association.

There have been some encouraging signs that the gun lobby's control over lawmakers may be waning in the face of growing effectiveness of grass-roots movements for gun safety. Hopefully, the resolve shown by New Zealand may serve as a model. It is notable, for example, that the government there consulted with the country's hunting and rural communities about the impact of an assault weapon ban and the general consensus was that military-style weapons were not really necessary. Indeed, even before the ban was enacted, some gun owners surrendered their semiautomatic weapons. Tweeted one farmer: "Until today I was one of the New Zealanders who owned a semi-automatic rifle. On the farm they are a useful tool in some circumstances, but my convenience doesn't outweigh the risk of misuse. We don't need these in our country."

Free online system for tax filing should be the goal

The New York Times
Congress has landed on one of those rare ideas that commands support from both Democrats and Republicans. Unfortunately, it's a bad one.

On Tuesday, the House approved legislation misleadingly titled the Taxpayer First Act that includes a provision prohibiting the Internal Revenue Service from developing a free online system that enables American households could use to file their taxes. The Senate is considering a similar piece of bipartisan legislation.

This makes no sense. Congress should be making it easier for Americans to file their taxes. Instead of barring the IRS from developing a free online system that enables American households could use to file their taxes, the Senate is considering a similar piece of bipartisan legislation.

Better yet, the United States could emulate the roughly three dozen countries, including Chile, Japan and Britain, where most taxpayers do not need to fill out tax returns. In some of those countries, the accuracy of tax withholding is sufficient to

obviate the annual filing process. In others, the government sends out completed forms to most taxpayers. In Estonia, filing taxes can be done in less than three minutes.

The federal government collects enough information about most American households to mail out a completed tax form that people would simply need to verify, sign and return. President Ronald Reagan proposed a version of just such a system.

In 1998, Congress passed a law instructing the IRS to develop such a system by 2008. President Barack Obama endorsed the concept during the 2008 presidential campaign. It still hasn't happened.

The explanation is sad but not surprising: The most vocal opponent of simplicity is Intuit, the maker of TurboTax, which has spent millions of dollars lobbying against efforts to reduce demand for its services. The company draws support from conservatives worried that making it easier to file taxes would make it easier to raise taxes.

Intuit and its allies, including opponents of the legislation, say that it's cheaper and better for the government to let private companies run the system. But companies have little incentive to advertise the availability of free filing or to make the system easy to use. Indeed, they have every reason to oppose the development of such products. That is how they make money.

As a result, the government is saving taxpayer money at the expense of those taxpayers.

Members of Congress pay lip service to ideas like filing taxes on a postcard, but even numbers that represent the current system of mass April procrastination by preventing the most obvious and effective way to simplify tax collection.

Dreaming of the day when robocalls' number is up

The Charlotte (N.C.) Observer
You know the game by now: A call comes into your cellphone. A number pops up on your screen. You don't recognize it. Your first instinct is to decline it, but what if it's your child's school? The auto repair guy? Something else? It's a guessing game, and we have the latest app to help with it.

U.S. cellphone users received 48 billion robocalls last year, and it's getting worse. Companies, some of them overseas, are using auto-dialing programs that encode Caller ID information so that the call looks like it's from a local number—sometimes even numbers that look like your employer. That's why we're answering calls from computers and sending humans to voicemail. We're cussing at our phones instead of talking on them. It's annoying, and it violates laws that are supposed to protect Americans from spamming and scammers.

But there is, potentially, a flickering of relief to the robocall madness.

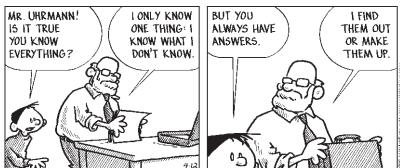
Lawmakers from state capitals to Washington are moving to stop the firehose of robocalls, and a U.S. Senate committee will hold a hearing this week on what it calls "The Scourge" of phone spam.

There's also a bill in the House, called legislation—the TRACED Act—which would push telecoms to improve their technology so that consumers can more easily identify scammers who wish to steal personal information. All four major carriers—AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and Verizon—have agreed to the additional regulation, but critics think that will be the 18-month deadline the TRACED Act would mandate.

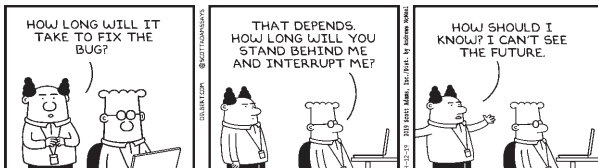
The bill also makes it easier for the FCC to more quickly slap robocallers with significant fines, and it nudges the agency to be more aggressive with phone companies. It also calls for the FCC to write rules requests for telecoms to adopt more robust robocall technology, but it has been slow to actually require action.

Congress and the U.S. government should pursue newer and tougher action. It won't end the calls coming in to our cellphones, but it could help us identify more quickly who's on the other end.

Frazz



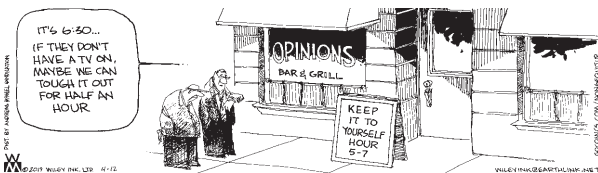
Dilbert



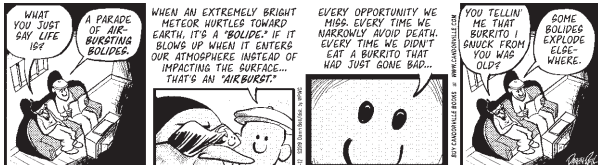
Pearls Before Swine



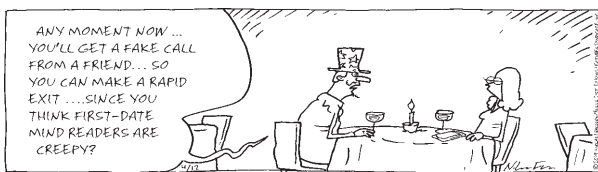
Non Sequitur



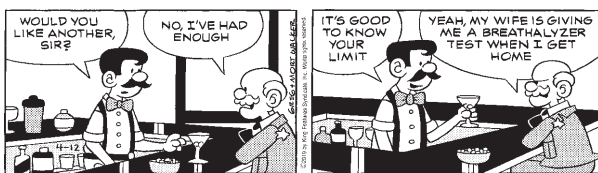
Candorville



Carpe Diem



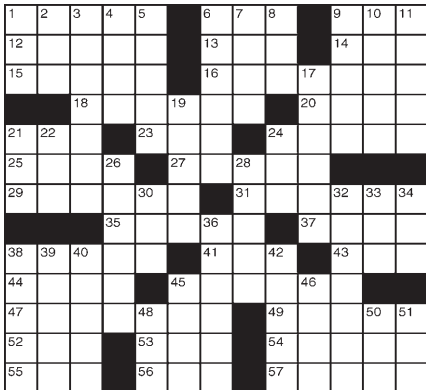
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Beach accessory
- 6 Altar promise
- 9 Wd. modifier
- 12 Blazing
- 13 At once
- 14 Singer Rawls
- 15 Lightweight wood
- 16 Old Pontiac
- 18 More tightly packed
- 20 "Star Wars" royal
- 21 Photo, for short
- 23 "Fresh Air" a'irer
- 24 Party beverage
- 25 Unforeseen problem
- 27 Say
- 29 Elk's horn
- 31 Wheel cover
- 35 Playful sea critter
- 37 Only
- 38 Barber's tools
- 41 Aug. and Sept.
- 43 Knock
- 44 Region
- 45 Halloween sprite
- 47 Young shopping center regular
- 49 Milk dispenser
- 52 Paris summer
- 53 Flamenco cheer
- 54 Cat calls?

DOWN

- 5 Shelter
- 6 Slugger Williams
- 7 Actress Debra
- 19 Sudden gush
- 21 Unpaid TV ad
- 22 Hostel
- 24 Little, in Lille
- 26 Worldwide
- 28 Pulsate
- 30 UFO crew
- 32 Deep-fried frank
- 33 Pie — mode
- 34 Zing
- 36 Acted badly?
- 38 Caravan beast
- 39 Emulate Lincoln
- 40 Donnybrook
- 42 Batter's dry spell
- 45 Big wind
- 46 Notion
- 48 Decay
- 50 Ram's ma'am
- 51 Trio after Q

Answer to Previous Puzzle



4-12

CRYPTOQUIP

CSZK SWNEXR SZ BZXLEXBD

GD SIJS QDGJHD CIDDK IJLD

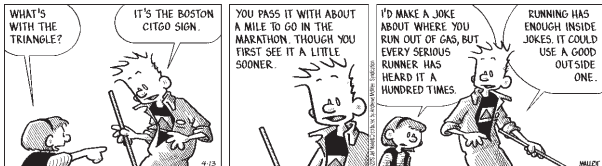
XZ BJKJBESN SZ HZXR QZW

SIEXRC. DVD VECI!

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I CAN'T SEEM TO TRUST PEOPLE WHO GO AROUND MAKING ROUGH DRAWINGS. THEY'RE ALL SO SKETCHY.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals Y

Frazz



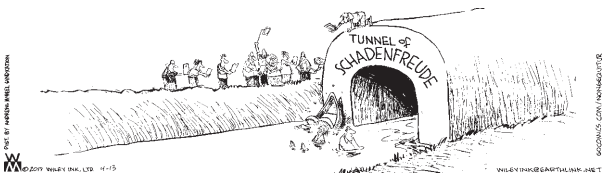
Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



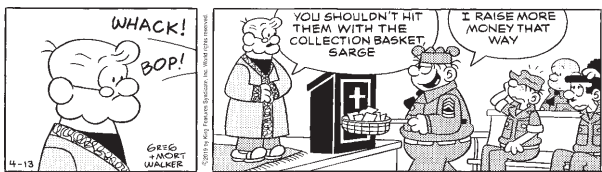
Candorville



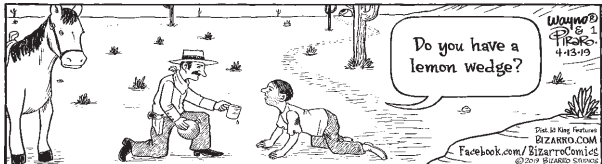
Carpe Diem



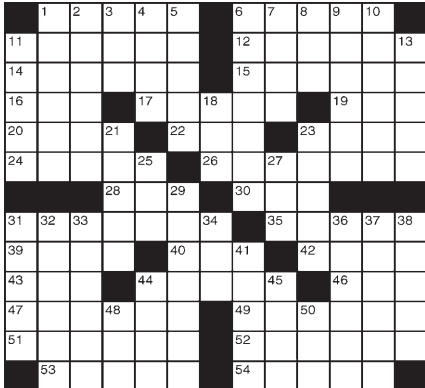
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



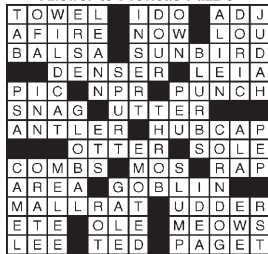
ACROSS

- 1 Milan's La —
- 6 Mops the deck
- 11 First game of the season
- 12 Fortune-telling decks
- 14 Gift giver's words
- 15 Not level
- 16 Italian "three"
- 17 Trombone part
- 19 Coach
- 20 Parseghian
- 22 Summer on the Seine
- 23 Not kosher
- 24 Hose matter
- 26 1955 Platters hit
- 28 — -di-dah
- 30 Pinnacle
- 31 "Pretty please?"
- 35 From the area
- 39 Writer Kingsley
- 40 Highland hat
- 42 "Elephant Boy" actor
- 43 UV ray-blocking stat
- 44 James —
- 46 Stanley Cup org.
- 47 Spill the beans

DOWN

- 1 Stylish
- 2 Breakfast bowlful
- 3 Whatever amount
- 4 Late July babies
- 5 As — (usually)
- 6 Pupil
- 7 Diminish
- 8 "Right you —!"
- 9 Emma of fiction
- 10 Sound system
- 11 Frequently
- 13 Major mix-up
- 18 "Am — blame?"
- 21 Bridge fees
- 23 Printing errors
- 25 Aye undoer
- 27 Texter's chuckle
- 29 Sites of rapid growth
- 31 Squander
- 32 Chevy model
- 33 Boost
- 34 Eg. and
- 35 Syr., once
- 36 Big gorge
- 37 Loathes
- 38 Humdingers
- 41 Taj —
- 44 Out of the storm
- 45 Simple
- 48 Pro Bowl stats
- 50 Singer Sumac

Answer to Previous Puzzle



4-13

CRYPTOQUIP

KH E FYXCYJ COBCB AYTJ
UPABKXEW HKCROBB WOZOW,
K JOXQYR PO KB WYYQKRS

EC CPO ZKSYJ UKXCTJO.
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: STOP TRYING TO CONVINCE ME THAT FEMALE SHEEP HAVE NO CAPACITY TO LONG FOR THINGS. EWE WISH!
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals L

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NFL

DREAM DEFERRED

DoD policy change put football on hold for Air Force WR Robinette, but he's finally getting his chance

By ARNIE STAPLETON
Associated Press

DENVER

Two years after the U.S. Defense Department thwarted his plans of going straight from the Air Force Academy to the NFL, Falcons all-time leading receiver Jalen Robinette is determined to turn that detour into a dream delayed, not dashed.

Close to fulfilling his two-year active-duty commitment, Robinette recently competed in Ohio State's pro day, where he caught passes from quarterback Dwayne Haskins and glances from pro scouts intrigued by the muscular 25-year-old who hasn't played since 2016, when he led the nation with a 27.4-yard average.

"I think that day was pretty much a win for me as far as, first of all, being there," Robinette told The Associated Press by phone from Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, where he's a logistics flight commander for the 58th Rescue Squadron. "It looked like 100 people that were there from the NFL."

"Just being there and to have eyes on me, especially after laying low for the last two years, was awesome," Robinette said. "And I think from a performance stance, I did pretty well. I looked pretty smooth. I feel really good about it."

Robinette told teams he expects to be available full time by August or September but has saved up vacation days to be able to attend offseason training programs, minicamps and training camps to show his hiatus from football wasn't a hindrance.

Robinette was the first Air Force player ever invited to the East-West Shrine Game, the Senior Bowl and the NFL scouting combine. He also expected to be the first one ever to go straight into the pros like stand-out Navy quarterback Keenan Reynolds had done a year earlier when he was drafted by the Baltimore Ravens.

That year, the DoD revised its pro sports policy, allowing graduates of service academies to apply for Ready Reserve so they could begin their pro sports careers immediately.

Robinette maintained a full class load his final semester while commuting 100 miles six days a week to train with other NFL hopefuls, including Christian McCaffrey, at Landow Performance, a facility in suburban Denver owned by Loren Landow, who is now the Denver Broncos strength coach.

Robinette was projected as a mid-round selection in 2017 but went undrafted after learning he would have to fulfill his two-year active duty commitment after all. He was told as the first round was underway that Air Force leaders had informed the academy that cadets would still be required to serve at least two years on active duty.

That was a precursor to an official reversal of the DoD's

'You don't have to worry about me being a knucklehead.'

Jalen Robinette

Air Force's all-time leading receiver

pro sports policy shortly after Jim Mattis was appointed secretary of defense.

The Pentagon said graduates from military academies receive their educations at taxpayer expense, so prospective professional athletes would have to follow in the steps of Roger Staubach, Chad Hennings and David Robinson and first serve their country.

Robinette insists he wasn't embittered by the policy reversal.

"I wasn't raised that way, to carry a grudge, to be bitter about something like that," Robinette said.

He had the same outlook after his commission and graduation were subsequently delayed by several months.

"Absolutely, it was another part of my path," Robinette said. "Because I was associated with someone who was in an open investigation, I was a witness and with that going on, the academy felt that until that played out, I had to stay there in close range until things got settled down or they figured out what was going on."

Meantime, Robinette was invited to minicamps with the Bills and Patriots but neither team signed him with his two-year active-duty commitment looming.

He received his commission and graduation on Sept. 7, 2017, and was stationed at Nellis, where he said he was determined to grow as an Air Force officer and train in his spare time to keep his NFL dream alive.

At first he was only able to lift weights and do some speed work, but this year he began training with the 58th Rescue Squadron, which has its own workout facility because its tasks are so arduous.

"So now I have a full field where I can work on route running, agility drills, stuff like that," he said.

A week before Ohio State's pro day, Robinette went back to Colorado Springs for Air Force's pro day, where his trainer clocked him at 4.53 seconds in the 40-yard dash, nearly a 10th of a second faster than his 4.62 clocking at the NFL combine two years ago.

Even though he'll need to shake some rust off his game, Robinette said, "people are always developing in the NFL." Besides, he said he's a better prospect now for having spent the last two years focusing on growing as an officer and a teammate.

He'll gladly pack weight onto his 6-foot-3, 220-pound frame if somebody sees him as a tight end prospect instead of a receiver: "Heck, if you need me to put my hand in the ground and play tackle, I'm fine with that."

"My goal is just getting a shot," said Robinette, who already has the answer for any team wanting to know why it should take a chance on a guy who's been out of football for two years: because he's been serving his country, growing as a leader and following the chain of command.

"I'll say, I can still play at a high level, I'm very coachable and really able to buy into an organization and their mission and goal," Robinette said. "You don't have to worry about me being a knucklehead."

Air Force wide receiver Jalen Robinette makes a catch during NFL Pro Day on March 20 at Ohio State in Columbus, Ohio. Robinette, the Falcons' all-time leading receiver, had to put his dream of a pro football career on hold for two years while he fulfilled his active duty commitment. Now he's hoping an NFL team will take a chance on him.

PAUL VERNON/AP

RUNNING/AUTO RACING



RICH PEDRONCELL/AP

Marla Runyan leads the field of runners during the women's 1,500 meters semifinals at the 2004 U.S. Olympic track and field trials in Sacramento, Calif. Runyan, who is visually impaired, was the top U.S. women's finisher in the 2003 Boston Marathon and is leading the Boston Athletic Association's efforts to give more physically impaired runners a chance to compete for Boston Marathon titles.

Boston adapting to the times

Marathon to be more inclusive with 3 new para athlete divisions in 2020

By JIMMY GOLEN

Associated Press



BILL ROTH, ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS/AP

Marko Cheseto, a college All-American who lost both feet to frostbite after being stranded outside in an Alaskan blizzard in 2011, is competing in this year's Boston Marathon and plans to run in the 2020 race.

BOSTON — When Marko Cheseto lines up in Hopkinton for the start of the Boston Marathon next week, he will already be looking past the finish line, 26.2 miles away.

It's next year, when organizers will christen three new para athlete divisions, that he will have a chance to claim something he covets more than a new personal best: a full-fledged Boston Marathon victory, and the possibility of climbing the podium on his two prosthetic legs just steps away from the spot where so many lost their limbs in the 2013 finish line attacks.

"I want those who were injured through that to know that we are here with them," said Cheseto, an All-American distance runner at Alaska-Anchorage who lost both feet to frostbite after he was stranded in a blizzard of 56 hours.

"We, as human beings, are very resilient; we have a lot of good people out there; we can show our solidarity out there," said Cheseto, a native Kenyan who became a U.S. citizen in November — seven years to the day after he went missing. "Together, we can do good things."

The world's oldest and most prestigious annual marathon, Boston was the first major 26.2-mile race to include a wheelchair division, in 1975. Once again, the wheelchair racers will be the first to break the tape on Boylston

Street on Monday, when the Boston Athletic Association stages the event for the 123rd time.

But scattered among the field of 30,000 that follows will also be people riding handcycles, running on prosthetic legs or conquering other physical impairments in the hopes of a personal best, or the satisfaction of finishing.

"They're coming to our events, and no one knows they're there," said Marla Runyan, a two-time Olympian and five-time Paralympic champion who has led the association's Athletes with Disabilities program for the past two years. "The B.A.A. wants people to see them for the athletes that they are."

Starting next year, the organization will award titles — and prize money — in three divisions, recognizing not just the wheelchair racers who have been an official part of the race for four decades but also ambulatory runners who are visually impaired or amputees.

Runners will compete for a \$1,500 top prize — men and women — from a total purse of \$16,500 that is on top of the \$125,000 prize pool for the wheelchair division.

Runyan, who was the top American woman in Boston when she finished fifth in 2003, has helped create qualification standards for next year's para athlete divisions, and she will invite runners who meet them. The organization is also hosting a U.S. para athletics classification session during marathon weekend.

Empty seats at Bristol highlight NASCAR's attendance problems

By JENNA FRYER

Associated Press

BRISTOL, Tenn. — Appalled by so many empty seats at Bristol Motor Speedway, Clint Bowyer did some digging and learned what race fans have known for more than a decade.

Hotels along the Tennessee-Virginia line near the iconic NASCAR track have pushed one of the most popular venues on the circuit beyond the budget of the average attendee. Bowyer made a handful of calls and said he was outraged to discover lower-end lodging, starting at more than \$300 a night.

"I was so glad Clint brought that up," said Marcus Smith, president and CEO of Bristol's parent company Speedway Motorsports Inc. "It's a crazy number some of these hotels are charging and it's just unfortunate. We continue to work with the business bureaus at all of our speedways and it is a challenge we are trying to find solutions to while working with the local business leaders."

Bristol was once the toughest ticket to get in NASCAR and boasted 55 consecutive sellouts from 1982 through 2010. The track only accommodated 30,000 fans when the streak began and expansions began in earnest when SMI bought the track in 1996.

The Coliseum-style structure now holds 146,000, but the crowd size has shrunk so much over the years that Bristol last weekend did not even sell tickets in the turns. Closed sections included the Darrell Waltrip Grandstand on the same weekend the Hall of Famer and all-time winningest driver at Bristol was feted for his upcoming retirement from broadcasting.

The swaths of empty seats — NASCAR and its tracks do not release attendance figures — made for unpleasant optics Sunday during the Cup race, arguably the best race of the season so far.

It featured 21 lead changes, late pit strategy played a role in the outcome and Kyle Busch won again. Many drivers had compl-

ing races, including Brad Keselowski, who lost his shot at the win when he was black-flagged before the final restart for not following a NASCAR directive. Kevin Harvick came from four laps down to finish 13th on a day his team was punished for failing pre-race inspection three times, and Kurt Busch continued to shine as the most consistent driver in the winless Chevrolet camp.

Smith acknowledged the challenges in selling tickets in this current NASCAR climate. Venues doubled and tripled their seating capacity during NASCAR's late 1990s boom and more tracks were built and added to a 10-month schedule.

Oversaturation became a problem and NASCAR and its most loyal fans were among those hit hardest by the 2008 economic collapse. The quality of racing deteriorated, too, and fans stopped coming.

Smith can offer alternatives to the high hotel rates with on-site camping packages; a group can rent a recreational vehicle for the weekend for the same price as booking a single room at most of the local hotels.

Bristol's spring race has also bounced around various March and April dates, and weather is often iffy enough to keep some fans at home. Sunday's race was moved up eight minutes in anticipation of late-day rain, and last year's event was pushed to Monday.

Smith is adamant the easiest promotion is a strong on-track product and the Bristol event was proof that fans can still catch a good show.

"The most important element is great racing and the racing we had at Bristol will sell more tickets will draw more eyeballs," Smith said. "That is the essential component, the essential ingredient for a successful NASCAR event and a successful Bristol event. I think the key is a resurgence in NASCAR is what we saw at Bristol and that's great competition."



WADE PAYNE/AP

There were plenty of empty seats Sunday at Bristol Motor Speedway and organizers did not even sell tickets in the turns.

MASTERS

Commentary

Warts and all, Reed returns as champion

By PAUL NEWBERRY
Associated Press

Call him The Imperfect Champion. Warts and all, Patrick Reed enters the Masters as the reigning holder of the green jacket.

He's an anomaly at staid, ol' Augusta National, which has always preferred bland and homogenized winners, who'll always say the right things without saying much of anything.

Patrick Reed, that's not.

His family life is messy. His attitude is brash. His college days are pock-marked with allegations of cheating and teammates wronged.

That's OK.

Villains are more fun anyway.

"Everyone has their own different personalities," Reed said in the lead-up to the Masters, which begins Thursday. "The biggest thing is to be true to yourself and go out and do what it is that you feel like is best for you, best for your team and also helps you perform the best."

For Reed, that means surrounding himself with a small but tight-knit group. That means working harder than anyone on the course. That means saying what's on his mind, even if that rubs some people the wrong way.

"He's not going to put on a comedy show. That's not his cup of tea," said Jason Alexander, the pro at Reed's home course, The Club at Carlton Woods near Houston.

"I know there are guys on tour who are very concerned what the media thinks of them," Alexander continued during a phone interview Wednesday. "I think they play to that. You'll hear people say, 'They're the nicest guys, they sign all this stuff for the fans,' but when you see them behind closed doors, they're totally different. Patrick Reed is the same guy, whether he's on the range (at his home course) or at the Masters. He's himself. I think he's proud of himself. I think he's proud of the way he handles himself. He's true to himself. He's not fake."

A year ago, when Reed was on the way to his first major championship, much was



MATT SLOCUM/AP

Patrick Reed practices on the driving range at Augusta National on Tuesday. The defending Masters champion has rubbed many fans and players the wrong way.

made of the fact that his parents and little sister were only 15 minutes away, watching on television at the home where Reed lived while leading Augusta State to a pair of national titles. The family has been estranged since 2012. Reed has cut off all contact, apparently rebuffing any attempt at reconciliation.

Shortly after his one-stroke victory over Rickie Fowler, Reed was asked if he regretted that his parents and sibling weren't at Augusta National for the most triumphant moment of his career. The reply was cold and distant.

"I mean, I'm just out here to play golf and try to win golf tournaments," Reed said. He has never discussed the fractured relationship, leaving others to speculate — thanks in part to comments from his family — that his wife, Justine, is the root of the problem. But no one beyond the parties involved really knows what happened. Wading into a broken family is a perilous misadventure.

Of course, Reed has never been frugal with his words — or his ego — when it

comes to sizing up things with a club in his hands.

In 2014, after becoming the youngest winner of a World Golf Championship event at Doral, he declared himself one of the planet's top five players. After a crushing U.S. loss to Europe in last year's Ryder Cup, the golfer who had embraced the role of "Captain America" griped to The New York Times about Jordan Spieth being responsible for breaking up a pairing that had worked so well at previous team events, as well as Jim Furyk's decision to bench Reed for both foursome sessions.

"For somebody as successful in the Ryder Cup as I am, I don't think it's smart to sit me twice," Reed said, conveniently overlooking that he lost both fourball matches playing alongside Tiger Woods.

When Reed first began playing at Carlton Woods, Alexander was a bit wary. He'd heard the same stories about the kid who was supposedly caught cheating — and even suspected of stealing in the locker room — during his first college stop at the University of Georgia, a guy

who was apparently such an obnoxious brat that Georgia alum Kevin Kisner (who played for the Bulldogs before Reed's arrival) said bluntly that he was reviled by all his teammates at both schools.

"I don't know that they'd p--- on him if he was on fire," Kisner told GolfDigest.com for a story published last December.

That folded quite neatly into Alexander's initial impression.

"When he first came out, he lived up to the billing," the club pro said. "He said, 'I want to go practice. Make sure no one bothers me.' He was very regimented about his work."

But as Alexander got to know Reed, the walls began to come down. He discovered a tireless worker, a guy who relished the grind of countless hours on the practice range.

"If anything, I probably hit too many golf balls," Reed conceded this week.

Beyond the course, Alexander found a person who's generous with his time, who works tirelessly behind the scenes to promote junior golf, who's devoted to his wife and their two children, who craves acceptance and longs to be respected but isn't about to change who he is.

Shortly after his Masters victory, Reed returned to Carlton Woods for a celebration. The club put on a big dinner, and Reed hung around to sign some 250 autographs for members and their families.

"As we're walking out, he gave me a hug," Alexander recalled. "He told me, 'Thanks for tonight.' He even got a little emotional. Here's this big-time guy, but he's telling me, 'I just haven't felt this sort of genuine support before. Ever.' As much as he acts like it doesn't bother him, I think it does."

Even though Reed is the defending champion, he won't get the biggest cheers at Augusta National this week. Those will go to players such as Woods and Spieth and Rory McIlroy. You know, the popular ones.

Too bad.

Villains are always more fun.

Paul Newberry is a sports columnist for The Associated Press. Write to him at pnewberry@ap.org or at www.twitter.com/pnewberry1963

Tough fifth hole gets a little more challenging

By DOUG FERGUSON
Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Tucked away on the far end of Augusta National is the toughest par 4 on the front nine.

For this Masters, it has become a little tougher.

The fifth hole, a slight dogleg to the left, was untouched for 30 years until the club extended the two bunkers left of the fairway some 80 yards toward the green to bring them into play. Fifteen years later, the championship tee was moved back some 40 yards, stretching the par 4 to 495 yards for this year's Masters.

"Significantly different," Brandt Snedeker said with just enough of a smile that "different" did not mean it was any easier. "It used to be a 3-wood for the long guys, then a short- to mid-iron. It was a par hole. You might make

a few birdies. You're not making a huge number there. But you're hitting a lot longer clubs in. And that's going to be a little different."

Eddie Peperrell has never played the Masters, but he has heard enough about No. 5 to make one self-deprecating observation when he heard of the change.

"This is a real shame cause I was expecting the 5th hole to be a safe bogey," Peperrell said on Twitter.

For years, No. 5 got plenty of respect and not enough attention.

The respect was understandable. The scoring average over the years of 4.26 was the highest of par 4s before making the turn.

"Make four pars there and you're gaining two shots on the field," Jordan Spieth said.

The lack of attention is all about location, the hole being somewhat isolated. For the well-connected,

it's the quickest way to get to Berckmans Place, the high-end hospitality area at the Masters. For others, it was a route to the par-3 sixth hole.

And for Jack Nicklaus, it was another occasion to get his name in the Masters record book.

Facing two of the more difficult pin positions, Nicklaus holed out for eagle twice — in the same tournament in 1995.

"The first day I hit a 7-iron," Nicklaus said last month. "The pin was on the front knob. It's impossible to get to it. I happened to hit it dead on the top of knob, it trickled over and went right in the hole. The third round, the pin was back right. Those were the two worse pin positions on the whole golf course. I hit a 5-iron and pushed it just slightly. It hit right on top, circles around and went right in the hole."

Simple, right?

"Five has always been a hole you're not likely to make birdie on," Nicklaus said. "How do I hit a good enough tee shot to be in a position to somehow stop it on the green?"

Alister Mackenzie and Bobby Jones patterned the hole after No. 17 at St. Andrews, the famous Road Hole, even though "Magnolia" has no road behind the green or any bunker in front of the green, not to mention a railway shed or a hotel.

The principle was the same — a tee shot as close to the trouble (the bunkers on No. 5), the better angle to the green that is guarded in the front by a slope some 5 feet high, making the green play smaller than it looks.

The bunkers are so deep that spectators on the right side of the fairway at times can't see the player at all. And for players?

"I haven't been in the bunker

much, but I can't get it on the green," Dustin Johnson said. "You don't want to hit it in the left bunker. You've got to hit a really good tee shot, and then another good shot to get on the green. You're not ever really trying to hit close to the flag. Back right you can hit a good shot and get it close. But for the most part, the rest of them you can't get it close."

It's a key part of the front nine. After a strong opening hole, players get a birdie chance on the pars 5 second, a short par 4 at No. 3, and then the longest of the par 3s at No. 4. Get through No. 5, and four reasonable scoring chances follow.

"Hit it on the green, two-putt and you keep going," Jon Rahm said. "It will be interesting to see how many people are under par. I've never hit it close. Nobody does."

NHL PLAYOFFS

Boston, Toronto face off – again

By MATT KALMAN
Associated Press

BOSTON — The Boston Bruins have a successful history against their first-round playoff opponent — but they're hardly dwelling on it.

For the second straight season, the Bruins will open the Stanley Cup playoffs with a first-round series against the Toronto Maple Leafs. Boston hosted Game 1 on Thursday night.

The Bruins won last year's matchup in seven games, and then took three out of four from their Atlantic Division rivals this season. But general manager Don Sweeney doesn't anticipate familiarity being a factor in the result of this year's best-of-seven series.

"No, I don't think it favors (either team)," Sweeney said Monday before Boston's practice. "I think there's been certainly changes to each team and additions and subtractions, the familiarity of the styles of play, but it's going to come down to the performance."

The biggest change for the Maple Leafs is the presence of center John Tavares, who signed a seven-year, \$77 million contract with Toronto last summer and then scored 47 goals in his first season with his hometown team. The Bruins' additions came closer to the trade deadline in February, when Boston acquired forwards Marcus Johansson and Charlie Coyle from New Jersey and Minnesota, respectively.

Boston leans heavily on Brad Marchand, Patrice Bergeron and David Pastrnak, a line that combined for 30 points in the series against Toronto last year and 260 points this season. In addition to Tavares, the Maple Leafs are built around leading scorer Mitchell Marner (94 points), 21-year-old former top overall pick

Auston Matthews (a career-high 73 points in his third season) and defenseman Morgan Rielly (third among NHL defensemen with 72 points).

Both starting goaltenders — Toronto's Frederik Andersen (2.77 goals-against average, .917 save percentage) and Boston's Tuukka Rask (2.48 GAA, .912 save percentage) — had strong seasons.

Although some of the personnel are new, Boston's strategy for stopping the Maple Leafs is the same.

"We feel that if they have time and space through the neutral zone to run those long stretch passes and attack the blue line, if we can't control that part of the game, and eliminate their D being involved in the rush by killing rushes at the blue line, then we're going to have problems," coach Bruce Cassidy said.

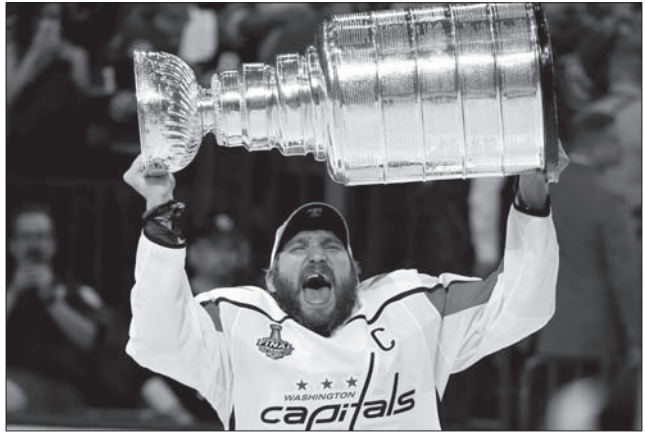
This will be the third postseason series between the Bruins and Maple Leafs this decade. The Bruins also won a seven-game series in 2013, when they rallied from 4-1 down in the third period of Game 7 to win in overtime. Combined with the Bruins' triumph last year after squandering a 3-1 series lead, Boston-Toronto matchups have taught the players about resiliency.

"Obviously it's a different team and you don't want to dwell (on) what's happened. But it's more just sort of past playoff experiences," Marchand said. "Regardless of the situation, until the series is over, anyone is in it. You know we've been down in a series before against them, they've been down and both teams have come back. So you know I'm sure it's going to be a very exciting series and you know regardless of what happens in the first four games, I'm sure the tides are going to swing one way or another."



MARK HUMPHREY/AP

Center John Tavares wasn't with the Maple Leafs during last year's seven-game loss to the Bruins in the first round of the playoffs. He signed with them in the offseason for seven years and \$77 million.



JOHN LOCHNER/AP

Washington captain Alex Ovechkin hoists the Stanley Cup on June 7 after the Capitals defeated the Vegas Golden Knights in Game 5 of Stanley Cup Final to clinch the series. For once, Ovechkin and the rest of the Capitals head into the playoffs without having to answer questions about past failures.

No more questions

Defending champs put past failures aside

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Va. — For once, Alex Ovechkin and the rest of the Washington Capitals head into the NHL playoffs without having to hear — and answer — so many of those same old, same olds.

Why do you do so well in the regular season and then stumble in the postseason? Why do you play your worst when it matters the most? Why can't you ever get past the second round? Seriously, why?

All it took to end all that talk was a Stanley Cup championship a year ago. Now the Capitals embark on a back-to-back bid by hosting Game 1 of their Eastern Conference first-round series against the Carolina Hurricanes on Thursday.

"It's a new year. What happened was great," said Ovechkin, whose 51 goals made him the league leader for a record eighth time. "So we're going to try to do it again."

The core is largely the same for the Metropolitan Division winners: Ovechkin, Nicklas Backstrom, Evgeny Kuznetsov, Tom Wilson, T.J. Oshie, Braden Holtby, John Carlson, Brooks Orpik, Matt Niskanen and more.

There are, of course, a few new players. And first-year head coach Todd Reirden, an assistant last season, is now in charge. But more than anything, what's truly different is that the story line that defined Washington's previous playoff appearances during Ovechkin's career is no longer relevant.

Reirden referred to the phenomenon as "the three weeks of questions before, about, 'How is this going to not work out?' or 'How are you guys going to not have the success?' A lot of questions about that."

"The lead-up to it has been a lot less painful, in regard to the fact that no one's asking those questions," he added. "Now it's been all focused on giving ourselves another chance to do this again. They haven't had to deal with that, which I think has

helped them."

Reirden will make his own adjustments, of course, such as reducing the amount of work this week before the action begins. He thinks that might help avoid the sort of start Washington had in 2018, dropping the first two games at home against the Columbus Blue Jackets.

There are other ways in which having gone through the whole thing before will help the Capitals, they figure.

Holtby spoke about how "externally, there's a lot less pressure — outside pressure — that can affect the team."

Oshie pointed out that last season's triumph led to more trust in the coaching staff and its game plans.

"It is a memory that we have and it's something that we can use — the experience of all that," Wilson said. "But it is a new team. There's new players and we are a new group. So we're going to go through that as a new group and we're going to go through it together and we're going to learn and we're going to build. We have that excitement and we have that emotion and it's fun to get back to this time of year."

That's a contrast to what this portion of the season used to be for this franchise. So much history of falling short. So many disappointments. Being a Presidents' Trophy winner that couldn't reach the conference finals. Being a No. 1 seed eliminated by a No. 8.

And on and on. "It's out of our minds now. It was always kind of stuck in guys' minds," Orpik said. "Whether they said it was or not, it was always in the back of your mind when something went wrong."

Brooks Orpik
Capitals
defenseman

But this group knows that a two-game hole against Columbus can be overcome. That the Pittsburgh Penguins can be beaten.

That a 3-2 deficit against the Tampa Bay Lightning can be erased.

That a Game 1 loss to the Vegas Golden Knights can be reduced to a mere blip on the way to a championship.

NHL PLAYOFFS

Scoreboard

First round (Best-of-seven; x if necessary)	
EASTERN CONFERENCE	
Columbus 1, Tampa Bay 0	
Wednesday: Columbus 4, Tampa Bay 3	
Friday: Tampa Bay 2, Columbus 1	
Sunday: at Columbus	
AFN-Sports2, 4 a.m. Monday CET; 8 a.m. Monday JKT	
Tuesday, April 16: at Columbus	
Friday, April 19: at Tampa Bay	
x-Sunday, April 21: at Columbus	
x-Tuesday, April 23: at Tampa Bay	
Boston vs. Toronto	
Thursday: at Boston	
AFN-Sports2, 3 a.m. Sunday CET; 10 a.m. Sunday JKT (joined in progress)	
Monday: at Toronto	
Thursday, April 17: at Toronto	
x-Friday, April 19: at Boston	
x-Sunday, April 21: at Toronto	
x-Tuesday, April 23: at Boston	
Washington vs. Carolina	
Thursday: at Washington	
AFN-Sports2, 9 p.m. Saturday CET; 4 a.m. Sunday JKT	
Friday: at Carolina	
Thursday, April 18: at Carolina	
x-Saturday, April 20: at Washington	
Wednesday, April 24: at Washington	
New York Islanders vs. Pittsburgh	
Wednesday: N.Y. Islanders 4, Pittsburgh 0	
Friday: at N.Y. Islanders	
AFN-Sports2, 1230 a.m. Saturday CET; 1230 a.m. Sunday JKT	
Sunday: at Pittsburgh	
Wednesday, April 16: at Pittsburgh	
x-Saturday, April 20: at Pittsburgh	
x-Tuesday, April 23: at N.Y. Islanders	
WESTERN CONFERENCE	
Dallas 1, Nashville 2	
Wednesday: Dallas 3, Nashville 2	
Sunday: at Nashville	
AFN-Sports2, Midnight Saturday CET; 7 a.m. Sunday JKT	
Monday: at Dallas	
Wednesday, April 17: at Dallas	
x-Thursday, April 18: at Dallas	
x-Monday, April 22: at Nashville	
x-Wednesday, April 24: at Nashville	
St. Louis 1, Winnipeg 1	
Wednesday: St. Louis 2, Winnipeg 1	
Friday: at St. Louis	
Sunday: at St. Louis	
Wednesday, April 16: at Winnipeg	
x-Thursday, April 18: at Winnipeg	
x-Saturday, April 20: at St. Louis	
x-Tuesday, April 23: at Winnipeg	

Roundup

Bailey's On goal lifts Islanders over Penguins

Associated Press

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — Josh Bailey didn't have much time to think when he saw the puck on the side of the crease after Mathew Barzal's try hit the left goalpost in overtime. Bailey just swooped in and knocked it into the net to send the New York Islanders home with a win.

Bailey scored at 4:39 of the extra period and the Islanders beat the Pittsburgh Penguins 4-3 on Wednesday night in the opener of their Eastern Conference first-round playoff series.

"It just happened so quick," Bailey said. "I wasn't sure. It didn't lay very flat for me. I was just trying to whack it and hope it went in. ... A crucial game. There's still a long way to go, but a good win for us."

Barzal had brought the puck into the offensive zone on a 2-on-1 break, faked in front to draw Matt Murray and sent the backhand shot that bounced off the left post. He was initially upset with himself at missing the opportunity before he saw Bailey come up and put it in.

"I see the puck laying there and I was just obviously (angry), I thought the chance had ended," Barzal said. "And I saw Bailey come in and swoop in to bury it. I was obviously super happy to see that."

Calgary vs. Colorado	
Thursday: at Calgary	
Saturday: at Calgary	
AFN-Sports2, 5 a.m. Sunday CET; Noon Sunday JKT (joined in progress)	
Wednesday, April 17: at Colorado	
x-Friday, April 19: at Calgary	
x-Sunday, April 21: at Colorado	
x-Tuesday, April 23: at Calgary	
San Jose 1, Vegas 0	
Wednesday: San Jose 5, Vegas 2	
Friday: at San Jose	
AFN-Sports2, 430 a.m. Saturday CET; 11:30 a.m. Saturday JKT	
Sunday: at Vegas	
AFN-Sports2, 4 a.m. Monday CET; 11 a.m. Monday JKT	
Tuesday, April 16: at Vegas	
x-Thursday, April 18: at San Jose	
x-Sunday, April 21: at Vegas	
x-Tuesday, April 23: at San Jose	

Wednesday	
Blue Jackets 4, Lightning 3	
Columbus 0 1 3-4	
Tampa Bay 3 0 0-3	
First Period—1, Tampa Bay, Killorn 1, 4:12 (gh), 2, Tampa Bay, Grell 1 (Miller, Cernak), 11:01, 3, Tampa Bay, Gourde 1 (Gergachev, Rutta), 17:50.	
Second Period—4, Columbus, Foligno 1 (Anderson), 9:15.	
Third Period—5, Columbus, Savard 1, 7:56, 6, Columbus, Anderson 1 (Jenner), 11:54 (gh), 7, Columbus, Jones 1 (Werenik, Panarin), 14:05 (pp).	
Shots on Goal—Columbus 6-11-9-26.	
Tampa Bay 3-11-5-29.	
Power-play opportunities—Columbus 1 of 3; Tampa Bay 0 of 3.	
Goals—Columbus, Bobrovsky 1-0 (29 shots, 26 saves), Tampa Bay, Vasilevsky 0-1 (26-22).	
A=19,092 (19,092). T=2-27.	

Blues 2, Jets 1	
St. Louis 0 0 2-2	
Winnipeg 1 0 1-1	
First Period—1, Winnipeg, Lae 1 (Little, Byfoglien), 13:28.	
Second Period—2, St. Louis, Perron 1 (Parayko, Sundqvist), 4:05, 3, St. Louis, Bozak 1 (Pietrangolo, Maroon), 17:55.	
Shots on Goal—St. Louis 8-8-10-26.	
Winnipeg 7-11-7-25.	
Power-play opportunities—St. Louis 0 of 3; Winnipeg 0 of 1.	
Goals—St. Louis, Binnington 1-0 (25 shots, 24 saves), Winnipeg, Hellebuyck 0-1 (26-24).	
A=15,321 (15,321). T=2-31.	

Islanders 4, Penguins 3 (OT)	
Pittsburgh 1 1 0 0-3	
N.Y. Islanders 4 1 0 1-4	
First Period—1, N.Y. Islanders, Eberle 1 (Pelech, Lee), 1:40, 2, Pittsburgh, Kessel 1 (Simons, Dumoulin), 5:42, 3, N.Y. Islanders, Nelson 1 (Toews, Eberle), 15:46 (pp).	
Second Period—4, Pittsburgh, Malkin 1 (Kessel, Schultz), 13:41 (pp).	
Third Period—5, N.Y. Islanders, Leddy 1 (Filipula, Komarov), 12:35, 6, Pittsburgh, Schultz 1 (Letang, Malkin), 18:31.	
Overtime—7, N.Y. Islanders, Barzal 1 (Barzal), 4:39.	
Shots on Goal—Pittsburgh 17-13-11-34, N.Y. Islanders 12-10-9-2-33.	
Power-play opportunities—Pittsburgh 1 of 3; N.Y. Islanders 0 of 3.	
Goals—Pittsburgh, Murray 0-1 (33 shots, 29 saves), N.Y. Islanders, Lehner 1-0 (44-41).	
A=13,917 (13,917). T=3-5.	

Stars 3, Predators 2	
Dallas 0 1 2-3	
Nashville 1 0 1-2	
First Period—1, Nashville, Josi 1 (Ellis, Bonino), 12:12.	
Second Period—2, Dallas, Heiskanen 1, 12:37 (pp).	
Third Period—3, Dallas, Heiskanen 2 (Kilgus), 6:10, 4, Dallas, Zuccarello 1 (Lovjoev, Benn), 10:39, 5, Nashville, Subban 1 (Edmond, Boyle), 12:24.	
Shots on Goal—Stars 9-10-10-29.	
Nashville 12-15-15-37.	
Power-play opportunities—Dallas 1 of 3; Nashville 0 of 4.	
Goals—Dallas, Bishop 1-0 (32 shots, 30 saves), Nashville, Rinne 0-1 (29-26).	
A=17,458 (17,113). T=2-29.	

Sharks 5, Golden Knights 2	
Vegas 0 1 1-2	
San Jose 1 3 1-8	
First Period—1, San Jose, Pavelski 1 (Burns), 14:42 (pp).	
Second Period—2, San Jose, Burns 1 (Hertl, Karlsson), 6:59, 3, San Jose, Vlasic 1 (Kane, Thornton), 7:44, 4, Vegas, Stone 1 (Pacioretty, Stastny), 8:32, 5, San Jose, Kane 1 (Nyquist, E.Karlsson), 15:42.	
Third Period—6, Vegas, Stone 2 (Theodore, Pacioretty), 15:26 (pp), 7, San Jose, Hertl 1 (Courture, Vlasic), 18:11.	
Shots on Goal—Vegas 5-16-26.	
San Jose 9-14-11-33.	
Power-play opportunities—Vegas 1 of 4; San Jose 0 of 3.	
Goals—Vegas, Fleury 0-1 (32 shots, 28 saves), San Jose, Jones 1-0 (26-24).	
A=12,662 (12,662). T=2-29.	



Dallas Stars center Matts Zuccarello, right, scores on Predators goaltender Pekka Rinne, left, during the third period of Game 1 of their first-round playoff series Wednesday in Nashville, Tenn.

Awesome for him. First game and that's nice for the confidence." Jordan Eberle had a goal and an assist, and Brock Nelson and Nick Leddy also scored for New York, which was opening a post-season series at home for the first time in 31 years. Robin Lehner stopped 41 shots.

Phil Kessel and Evgeni Malkin each had a goal and an assist, and Justin Schultz also scored for the Penguins. Murray finished with

29 saves.

Blues 2, Jets 1: Tyler Bozak scored with 2:05 left in the third period to give visiting St. Louis the victory in Game 1 of the Western Conference opening-round playoff series.

Pat Maroon sent a backhand pass from behind the net out to Bozak in the slot, and Bozak's quick shot went by Winnipeg's Connor Hellebuyck for the go-ahead goal.

Jackets surprise Bolts in Game 1

BY MARK DITTLER

Associated Press

TAMPA, Fla. — The Columbus Blue Jackets rebounded from a dismal start to stun the team that had the NHL's best regular-season record.

Seth Jones scored the go-ahead goal on the power play to cap Columbus' three-goal third period, and the Blue Jackets rallied to beat the Tampa Bay Lightning 4-3 in Game 1 of the teams' first-round Eastern Conference playoff series Wednesday night.

"We can't get comfortable," Jones said. "Nothing is going to get easier. It's only going to get harder."

Jones made it 4-3 from the slot with 5:55 to play as the Blues Jackets erased a 3-0 deficit after the Lightning scored three times in the opening period.

With Columbus trailing 3-1 in the third, David Savard decided under Lightning defenseman Victor Hedman and scored 7:56 into the period to make it a one-goal game. Josh Anderson picked up a short-handed goal that tied it at 3 at 11:54.

The Blue Jackets became the 27th NHL team to overcome at

least a three-goal deficit to win a playoff game in regulation.

Nick Poligno had the other goal for Columbus, and Sergei Bobrovsky ended up with 26 saves.

The Lightning, who matched the 1995-96 Detroit Red Wings for the most wins in a regular season with 62, got first-period goals from Alex Killorn, Anthony Cirelli and Yanni Goulet. Andrei Vasilevsky stopped 22 shots.

"Our mentality was, we wanted to outscore them tonight instead of build a lead and then shut them down," Lightning coach Jon Cooper said. "Our mentality has to be when we get in these situations it's shut teams down, not to add to the lead."

Tampa Bay scored 325 goals in 2018-19, the most by any team in 23 years.

Hedman returned after missing the final four regular-season games with an upper-body injury. The Norris Trophy winner took a helmet to the face during a collision with Washington's Carl Hagelin on March 30.

Nikita Kucherov, who had an NHL-best 128 points in the regular season, was held without a point.

rookie teenage defenseman in NHL history to score a goal in their first career playoff game and the first since Adam Larsson with New Jersey on May 1, 2012, against Philadelphia, according to NHLStats. He also became the third-youngest with a multi-goal game and the youngest in franchise history with a postseason goal at 19 years, 266 days.

Matts Zuccarello also scored, helping Dallas continue its success from the regular season in Nashville, where the Stars won twice.

Roman Josi and P.K. Subban each scored for Nashville.

Sharks 5, Golden Knights 2: Joe Pavelski took a puck off his chin to score the opening goal and host San Jose raced past Vegas in Game 1 of their first-round series.

Brent Burns, Marc-Edouard Vlasic and Evander Kane added goals in a wild second period that featured heavy hitting, a parade to the penalty box and the high intensity expected in a series between two franchises that have become fierce rivals in just two seasons.

Tomas Hertl added an empty-net goal and Martin Jones made 24 saves to get San Jose started off right in this series.

Mark Stone scored both goals for the Golden Knights.

MARK HUMPHREY/AP

NHL PLAYOFFS

Being Tom Wilson

Inside the life of hockey's most hated man

By STEPHEN WHYNO
Associated Press

Tom Wilson tries not to read everything about him on social media. You'd think being on the receiving end of endless tweets and messages that are, well, not suitable for work would be reason enough to skip them. But Wilson can't just ignore it all because sometimes it goes beyond hockey.

"Last year there's people putting my parents' address on Twitter and people underneath being like, 'Oh, good to know,'" Wilson said. "I said: 'Hey, just so you know, this is out there. The mail and stuff, just make sure you're aware.'"

Such is life for Wilson, one of the most hated players in the NHL—if not the guy at the top of the list. The Washington Capitals winger has been suspended four times over the past 19 months and there were a few other incidents that might have crossed the line. He is the guy opponents and their fans despise and the player no teammate would willingly do without. Inside the Capitals' locker room, the 25-year-old Wilson is so admired he could succeed Alex Ovechkin as captain.

In an era where enforcers are hard to find, not only does Wilson play on the edge—he lives on it. "I think a lot of guys maybe have lost some respect for him," said St. Louis Blues forward Zach Sanford, who broke into the league with Wilson and the Capitals. "He's had quite a few cheap hits the past couple years. But that's just how he plays. He's on the edge. Sometimes he crosses it."

Wilson gave Columbus' Alexander Wennberg a concussion and broke the jaw of Pittsburgh's Zach Aston-Reese in the playoffs. He gave St. Louis' Oskar Sundqvist a concussion with a hit to the head—in the preseason—that drew a 20-game suspension that was reduced to 14 by an arbitrator. He has avoided trouble since then and set career highs with 22 goals and 40 points in 63 games, becoming one of Washington's most important pieces as it tries to repeat as Stanley Cup champion.

"He's shooting the puck better than he has ever done," said New Jersey Devils defenseman Connor Carrick, a fellow 2012 Capitals draft pick and junior teammate of Wilson's in the Ontario Hockey League. "He's got a good glide for a big guy, and that's what you've seen. I think, with other guys around the league with that frame that haven't been able to continue."

When the Capitals selected Wilson 16th overall seven years ago, then-general manager George McPhee hoped they'd be getting a power forward like Milan Lucic.

By the numbers

4

Number of suspensions handed down by the NHL to the Washington Capitals' Tom Wilson in the past 19 months.

22

Number of goals scored this season by Wilson, a career high.

40

Number of points by Wilson this season, also a career high.

SOURCE: Associated Press

The 6-foot-4, 218-pound Wilson might turn out to be better than Lucic, especially if he can stay on the right side of the suspension line and play 75-plus games in a season.

"He's fast, he's got good skill, he plays a physical game, he puts D-men on edge and other forwards on edge when he's on the ice," said Vegas forward Ryan Reaves, who gave Wilson a concussion of his own in December and apologized in the aftermath of the hit. "I think he is a really good player. I think if he played a little smarter, he'd be even better."

Wilson has worked at that. He spent time with vice president of player safety and former enforcer George Parros going over video clips and what the league deems acceptable. This season he has been thinking more about each hit he delivers because the next one that crosses the line could cost him more than a couple of months.

The Toronto native said his suspension history—two for illegal checks to the head, one for interference and one for boarding—has forced him to change his approach.

"I have to be aware of it," Wilson said. "Hockey's an extremely fast game, and it's a hard-hitting game. It's probably faster than it ever has been, so those plays happen quickly and I've just got to do the best I can to control the situation and control the outcome, and that's just something that I've kind of tried to focus on."

Pittsburgh's Jack Johnson said Wilson has a history of being "reckless and dangerous" and that players have to be aware of where Wilson is on the ice because "he's big and runs around."

For all the outside talk about taming Wilson, the Capitals don't really want that.

"He has to remember what he is at times," alternate captain Brooks Orpik said. "Without that physical side, he's not going to get the space and the chances that he gets offensively. The reason he gets as many chances and opportunities is because of his physical play and his intimidation. If that leaves his game, then his opportunities are going to be suppressed."

Teammate Nicklas Backstrom said one of Wilson's strengths is that he can do it all, from 5-on-5 to power play to penalty kill. Washington signed Wilson to a \$31 million, six-year contract last summer for all those elements, which he showcased with 15 points in 21 playoff games during the Stanley Cup run.

Wilson said he wants to be the kind of guy who's hard to play against but also move on without any hard feelings. Yet he is aware of his reputation.

"The hockey world's very small," he said. "I always wanted to be someone that's hard to play against but you can go out and have a beer with the guy and have fun in the summer or whatever. I think that's what hockey is kind of about."

Wilson, of course, is not just the muscle on a star-laden team featuring Ovechkin, Backstrom and Evgeny Kuznetsov but is also a young leader the organization is building around.

AP sports writers Will Graves and Pat Graham and freelance reporter W.G. Ramirez contributed.



Nick Wass, above, and Chris O'Meara, below/AP

Above: New York Islanders defenseman Adam Pelech, left, collides with Washington Capitals right wing Tom Wilson against the boards. Below: Wilson, right, fights the Tampa Bay Lightning's Erik Cernak.



NBA

Major changes loom for Pelicans, All-Star F Davis

Davis' lame-duck stint with New Orleans likely at an end

BY BRETT MARTEL
Associated Press

METAIRIE, La. — A grinning Anthony Davis emerged from the Pelicans' weight room holding one of his white No. 23 game jerseys and tossed it over the shoulder of guard Jrue Holiday, mumbling, "so you won't forget about me," as he walked away.

While Davis made his share of good memories during seven seasons — and six All-Star selections — in New Orleans, the Pelicans will be eager to forget the lame-duck, unceremonious manner in which his tenure with the club ended.

A new era is on the horizon and the Pelicans appear eager to see it begin.

"Really excited," Holiday asserted when asked to share his thoughts about what has the making of a busy offseason for the Pelicans, who appear to be on the cusp of hiring a new general manager. "Obviously with opportunities in this offseason to resign guys or pick up new guys, to see what happens with the future with upper management, everything's up in the air."

Plagued by injuries to key players, the Pelicans were struggling to stay in striking distance of a playoff spot in late January when Davis essentially derailed the season by allowing his representation to publicly request a trade. Davis remains under contract for another season, but the Pelicans may be inclined to deal him before the draft to maximize rebuilding options.

Between the public trade request, for which he was fined \$50,000, an obscene gesture toward a fan, for which he was fined \$15,000, and his decision to wear a T-shirt to the season finale with the Looney Toons sign off, "That's all folks," Davis has taken some blows to his reputation. But he said he has few regrets and maintained that he loved New Orleans, Pelicans fans and his teammates.

"In everything you do, there's always something to learn," Davis said, adding that he only wore the Looney Toons T-shirt because it had been laid out for him by a person he declined to name. He said he never considered how wearing it might



SCOTT TIMMEL/USA TODAY SPORTS

Pelicans forward Anthony Davis, wearing a 'That's All Folks,' T-shirt under his jacket, exits the floor, possibly for the last time at a Pelican, after Tuesday's game against the Golden State Warriors in New Orleans. Davis remains under contract for another season, but the Pelicans may be inclined to deal him before the draft.

be perceived, adding, "It doesn't matter to me."

The six-time All-Star said he is eager to see whom the Pelicans hire as GM and to meet with that person. Davis also said that if the Pelicans found trade offers unsuitable this season and still had him on the roster when next season began, he'd continue honoring his contract.

"I don't have any ill will toward anybody," Davis said. "I can't be mad if I'm still here next year."

The Pelicans have interviewed six general manager candidates: Pelicans interim

general manager Danny Ferry, as well as former Cleveland Cavaliers general manager David Griffin, Golden State assistant GM Larry Harris, Brooklyn Nets assistant GM Trajan Langdon, Houston Rockets assistant GM Gerson Rosas and interim Washington president of basketball operations Tommy Sheppard.

The person they hire will oversee the Davis trade, the next draft and could decide whether to retain coach Alvin Gentry, who has two years left under contract and expressed optimism he'd be given an opportunity to stay.

'I don't have any ill will toward anybody. I can't be mad if I'm still here next year.'

Anthony Davis
New Orleans Pelicans forward

"I'm going to be confident until they tell me I'm not coming back," Gentry said. "That's the only way I know how to approach it."

Gentry has a regular-season record of 145-183 with one playoff appearance last season and one playoff series victory — a sweep of Portland before losing in five games to eventual champion Golden State.

Gentry could make the argument that the deck was stacked against him this season.

Davis, who averaged 25.9 points, 12 rebounds and 2.4 blocks in 56 games, made his trade demand with 32 games left in the season and wound up missing 17 of those games, sometimes for rest and at other times was listed as out with back spasms, including for the final seven games.

When he did play, it was rarely for much more than 20 minutes a game.

The Pelicans finished 33-49, which guaranteed they'd finish better than at least six teams. That leaves them with about a 25% chance of jumping up to a top-four selection through the NBA's draft lottery on May 14.

Trading Davis also could fetch a high draft choice.

The Pelicans will have a number of other pressing roster matters as well. Starting forward Julius Randle and starting point guard Elfrid Payton both will be free agents. Randle is coming off of the best season of his career — averaging 21.4 points and 8.7 rebounds. He credited the Pelicans with fostering his development and said he's open to coming back.

Payton, who is from New Orleans, said playing in his hometown exceeded expectations and that he would like to be back. Payton missed much of the season with injuries, but also put together a historically significant string of five straight triple-doubles this spring.

Suns, Jones face tough decisions regarding coach, draft

By JOSE M. ROMERO
Associated Press

PHOENIX — The Phoenix Suns suffered through their fifth straight losing season and sixth in the past seven. They'll be spectators once again when the NBA playoffs start this week. Yet they believe the franchise can rise again.

Excitement surrounding No. 1 overall draft pick Deandre Ayton and young star Devin Booker fizzled quickly, and most of the supporting cast of veterans was traded away.

In their place came some players, most notably forward Kelly Oubre Jr., who made an impact. Oubre, a restricted free agent this offseason, had a 16-game streak reaching double figures in points. In early March, Phoenix had a run of five wins in seven games that included victories over the



MICHAEL WYKE/AP

First-year Suns head coach Igor Kokoskov led the team to a Western Conference-worst 19-63 record this season.

top teams in the East and West, Milwaukee and Golden State.

After removing the interim tag from general manager James Jones and hiring Jeff Bower as senior vice president of basketball operations on Thursday, the Suns now have must decide whether Igor Kokoskov will return as head coach after guiding the team to a Western Conference-worst 19-63 record.

"As a coach you always ask for more, from yourself and from your team," Kokoskov said. "A lot of work has to be done. Our guys understand that. I think Phoenix Suns fans should be excited and happy about our talent and potential, but we need the potential to turn into productivity."

Kokoskov said he sees his own work reflected in the team's finish and took full responsibility. He said Wednesday he had yet to be told anything about his future

by the front office, but he did receive several votes of confidence from players.

Booker said he believes in the Suns' top decision makers.

"I'm cool with the roster how it is," he said. "I have total trust in our front office, everybody making the decisions, that we're going to be in good shape next year."

The Suns tied for the second-worst record in the NBA and guaranteed themselves a 14% chance of winning the draft lottery and again securing the first pick in this summer's draft.

Phoenix's 2018 lottery pick, Ayton, started 70 games and averaged 16.3 points and 10.3 rebounds per game.

Getting into the top two gives the Suns the chance to select Duke forward Zion Williamson or Murray State point guard Ja Morant, the two players widely regarded as top prospects.

NBA



ALEX BRANDON/AP

Washington Wizards guard Bradley Beal, shown shooting over San Antonio Spurs guard Derrick White on April 5, is the team's top returnee. He averaged 25.6 points, 5.5 assists and 5.0 rebounds.

Wizards pick up the pieces following wreck of a season

By HOWARD FENDRICH
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Washington Wizards came into the season aiming for 50 wins. They finished with 50 losses.

There was poor play. There was little defense. There was the embarrassing 10-31 road record, part of a 32-50 overall mark, the team's worst in six seasons. The fallout from missing the playoffs has begun, with team president Ernie Grunfeld's firing.

"I take the responsibility of I could have done better," coach Scott Brooks said Monday at the club's practice facility. "And going forward, I need to be better."

He also said it was too soon for him to say how he can improve.

The Wizards head into a pivotal offseason, with very few certainties other than this: Bradley Beal is the key piece.

He became Washington's unquestioned leader and best player as John Wall missed more than half of the season because of heel surgery. Wall will sit out most and perhaps all — of next season, too, because of a later operation to repair a torn Achilles tendon.

"It's been a rocky year, for sure," said Beal, an All-Star shooting guard and the first player in franchise history to average at least 25 points, five rebounds and five assists in a season. "A disappointing year, in terms of winning and everything like that."

With Wall's supermax deal kicking in for 2019-20, and few other players under contract, plus the direction of the team unclear until a new GM is in place, the coming weeks will be important. Other things to know about the Wizards:

By the numbers

112.8

Defensive rating this past season by the Washington Wizards, placing them 27th out of 30 teams in the league.

47.7

Average rebounds per game this season for the Wizards, which puts them 27th in the league.

10-31

Washington's road record, ranked 26th in the league.

SOURCE: NBA.com

Beal blossoms: Beal was 12th in the NBA in scoring average at 25.6 points, and he also had 5.5 assists and 5.0 rebounds per game. He's clearly the leading man on the court, and his terrific production could also mean that he earns all-NBA honors — which would make him eligible for a supermax contract of his own. "Bradley had a monster year. He's a guy

you have to account for in every which way," Boston Celtics coach Brad Stevens said. "Obviously is very deserving of all the recognition that comes his way."

Wall's future uncertain: Wall says he can't be sure whether he will be able to play next season. He does, however, plan to use others' doubts and critiques as motivation. "He has a lot of work ahead of him, there's no question," Brooks said. "He has a lot of work. They say he's going to be out a majority of next season. But he will work. He's very motivated. I talk to him, text him. He's excited about the challenge ahead of him. He's definitely going to have a lot of tough days. And he's going to fight through them."

GM search: Owner Ted Leonsis is enlisting an outside firm to help with replacing Grunfeld. The only known candidate is Tommy Sheppard, who is taking over Grunfeld's duties on an interim basis. When Leonsis fired the GM of his NHL team, the Washington Capitals, the replacement came from in-house, Brian MacLellan.

Roster in flux: There's not a lot assured about the roster. Dwight Howard, who appeared in only nine games because of injuries, has a player option to return, but even if he exercises it, Washington might not want to keep him. Little-used backup center Ian Mahinmi is under contract, a disaster of a signing by Grunfeld that the team could be stuck with. Rookie Troy Brown Jr. will be back. But with players such as Otto Porter Jr. already traded away, and others on expiring deals, there is a lot of room for new faces — even if there might not be a lot of salary-cap space.

Cavs have hope at end of post-LeBron season

By TOM WITHERS
Associated Press

CLEVELAND — After handing out sneakers, signed balls and other gifts to fans, the Cleveland Cavaliers gathered one last time after the fourth-worst season in franchise history ended and took photos with adored teammate Channing Frye, whose retirement triggered a three-day celebration.

Losing usually doesn't look like this.

There were smiles and hugs as a group that never splintered during a taxing season that ended two months earlier than the previous four bonded as brothers. Later, in a pin-drop quiet locker room, coach Larry Drew urged the Cavaliers to reflect and challenged each "to come back a different player."

Then, Drew, who doesn't know if he himself will be back, offered thanks.

"I understand how difficult the season was with everything that took place," said Drew, who took over seven games in following Tyronn Lue's firing. "But they stayed professional and they kept working hard, and I just wanted to let them know how much I appreciated it."

And with that, an offseason of uncertainty and optimism began.

Drew's future is the first order of business for Cleveland, which finished 19-63 and ended its first season since LeBron James left for a second time on a 10-game losing streak.

The 61-year-old Drew steered the team through countless injuries and other challenges while overseeing the development of point guard Collin Sexton, who didn't miss a game and joined Larry Bird and Stephen Curry as the only rookies in NBA history to average at least 16 points while shooting better than 40% on three-pointers and 80% from the foul line.

Drew was handed a difficult situation that became worse when star forward Kevin Love underwent foot surgery in November, effectively ending any thought the Cavaliers entertained of competing for a playoff spot. But Drew never bled.

"L.D. was outstanding," said forward Larry Nance Jr., another of the season's success stories. "That was not an easy position he got put into. Six games into the season — here are the reins, figure it out. That's exactly what he did. Got us on the right path. Would have been easy for him to mail it in, too, just because a year like this, this isn't fun."

"Losing isn't fun, so being able to keep a positive attitude and keep moving forward at the rate we did, I think was a lot in part to Larry Drew. I'm a big fan."

So is Love, who played in only 22 games but came away feeling like the Cavaliers are headed in the right direction.

"I've always had his back," Love said. "I'd like to think our record



TOM DEAR/AP

Cleveland Cavaliers guard Collin Sexton, left, joined Larry Bird and Stephen Curry as the only NBA rookies to average at least 16 points while shooting better than 40% on three-pointers and 80% from the foul line.

has been very positive when he's been coaching as well, especially when I've been healthy. He has us all playing extremely hard and being true to ourselves, so I love L.D. If he is with us, great, and if not, then I hope we kick his (rear) when he's a head coach somewhere else."

Another possibility is Drew returning as an associate head coach, the role he accepted on Lue's staff in 2016. But any new coach would have to be agreeable to working with Drew.

The lottery is on May 14, when the random sound of ping-pong balls could change the fate of a team hoping to land Duke's Zion Williamson, the consensus top college prospect.

Cleveland finished tied with Phoenix for the league's second-worst record behind New York. Those three teams will have a 14% chance of picking first, but depending on how things play out, there's the possibility of falling as far as sixth and missing out on Williamson, his Duke teammate RJ Barrett or Ja Morant, Murray State's electrifying guard who already has the Cavaliers' attention.

"Everybody will be anxious," Love said of the days ahead. "Obviously, we hope we get the best player."

Hope seemed lost for the Cavaliers when James bolted last summer, devastating a team — and city — he treated to a title and four straight Finals appearances. But despite starting over, and despite untold injuries, Cleveland emerged from a rough season excited about the future.

"Would have been easy to kind of fold and whatever, just get steamrolled the last however many games and nobody learned anything, chucked shots and played pick-up basketball, but I don't think we did that," Nance said. "We improved in a lot of different areas and a lot of individual areas."

NBA



MARK J. TERRILL/AP

Magic Johnson speaks to reporters prior to Tuesday's game between the Lakers and the Portland Trail Blazers in Los Angeles. Johnson's abrupt departure as Lakers president of basketball operations presents an opportunity for Los Angeles owner Jeanie Buss to sever the staid, tradition-bound mentality lingering around the Lakers from her father's tenure.

Lakers have opportunity for new era

BY GREG BEACHAM

Associated Press

EL SEGUNDO, Calif. — The Los Angeles Lakers already had plenty of problems to fix during the summer after their sixth straight losing season.

Replacing the person in charge of fixing those problems is suddenly at the top of the list.

Magic Johnson's shocking resignation as the 16-time NBA champions' president of basketball operations Tuesday night compounded the turmoil that always seems to envelop the Lakers, who remain among the most talked-about sports franchises in the world even though they haven't made the playoffs since 2013.

Owner Jeanie Buss unveiled no immediate plan Wednesday for the basketball leadership of the Lakers — perhaps understandably, since she had no idea she needed a plan 18 hours earlier.

Yet Buss must have realized by now that Magic's abrupt departure creates an opportunity.

With her sentimental favorite gone and no clear successor in sight, Buss has a chance to sever the staid, tradition-bound mentality lingering around the Lakers from her father's ownership tenure.

Last summer, the Lakers added LeBron James. This summer, they could add a new way of thinking.

Whether Buss wants that opportunity is the biggest question she faces.

She could hire a hungry executive to bring cutting-edge ideas into the Lakers' insular culture. Innovative ex-Cleveland GM David Griffin is an obvious choice, but there are many others who wouldn't be bound by the unrealistic expectations and dewy-eyed attachments created by the Lakers' many trophies.

Head coach Luke Walton's future is still uncertain, with only one more guaranteed season on his contract and a career coaching record 50 games below .500. Buss had already given permission to Magic to make a change, and a new front office could want a new coach — unless it arrives with Buss' instructions to give him another chance.

Playoffs set after dramatic final day

Detroit grabs final postseason berth; Golden State and Houston on the same side of the West bracket

Associated Press

MIAMI — The last spot in the NBA playoffs went to the Detroit Pistons.

Their reward: A series against MVP candidate Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Milwaukee Bucks.

The drama of the regular season went all the way to the very end, with seven of the eight first-round playoff matchups not being clinched until the final night was in the books — the last three of them, out West, going down to literally the final moments.

The two-time defending champion Golden State Warriors will start their quest for a fourth title in five years against the Los Angeles Clippers.

"It's not going to be as easy as people think it is," Warriors star Kevin Durant said.

That's the beauty of the playoffs. It's not supposed to be easy.

First-round games in all eight series will be played starting Saturday and Sunday. The second round cannot begin until April 27 at the earliest, the conference finals couldn't start before May 12 and the NBA Finals will start on May 30.

Eastern Conference

The only matchup in the NBA that was set before Wednesday night was No. 4 Boston against No. 5 Indiana.

Everything else, just like all the West matchups, fell into place during Game 82s on Wednesday.

The Bucks, the NBA's top overall seed, play the Pistons. No. 2 Toronto draws No. 7 Orlando, with the Magic in the postseason for the first time since 2012. And No. 3 Philadelphia — a team wrapped in intrigue right now — will face No. 6 Brooklyn.

Joel Embiid played in only 10 of the 76ers' 24 games since the All-Star break,

and general manager Elton Brand told reporters Wednesday that "it is possible" the team's best scorer and rebounder won't be ready to start the playoffs.

Embiid isn't the only injury situation that made headlines Wednesday. The Celtics announced that Marcus Smart will miss four to six weeks with an injury to his left oblique — a massive blow to Boston.

Western Conference

Portland rallied from 28 points down on Wednesday against Sacramento — which blew a lead that large for the second time this season.

Denver finished on a 15-0 run to beat Minnesota.

And with that, the West bracket was shaken up one last time before it was finally set.

Top-seeded Golden State will face the eighth-seeded Clippers, a matchup that was known after early results Wednesday. The rest went right down to the wire, with No. 2 Denver facing No. 7 San Antonio, No. 3 Portland getting No. 6 Oklahoma City and No. 4 Houston facing No. 5 Utah. It was a worst-case for Houston, which entered the season's final night in place to finish second, third or fourth in the West.

The way the results fell means the Rockets, if they get past the Jazz, would likely see the Warriors in the second round — and not in the Western Conference finals. So there will be no rematch of last year's title series out West, a tussle where the Rockets had a 3-2 series lead before Chris Paul's hamstring balked and the Warriors went on to advance and reach the NBA Finals.

The Nuggets clinched the No. 2 seed with their big rally to top the Timberwolves. The Blazers got to the No. 3 spot with their wild comeback to beat the Kings. The combination of those results dropped Houston to the No. 4 seed.

Scoreboard

First round

(Best-of-seven; x-if necessary)

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Monday: at Milwaukee

Tuesday: at Milwaukee

Saturday: at Detroit

Sunday: at Detroit

x-Wednesday, April 24: at Milwaukee

x-Friday, April 26: at Detroit

x-Sunday, April 28: at Milwaukee

Toronto vs. Orlando

Saturday: at Toronto

Tuesday: at Toronto

Friday: at Orlando

Sunday: at Orlando

x-Tuesday, April 23: at Toronto

x-Thursday, April 25: at Orlando

x-Saturday, April 27: at Toronto

Philadelphia vs. Brooklyn

Saturday: at Philadelphia

Monday: at Philadelphia

Thursday: at Brooklyn

Sunday: April 28: at Brooklyn

x-Tuesday, April 23: at Philadelphia

x-Thursday, April 25: at Brooklyn

x-Saturday, April 27: at Philadelphia

Boston vs. Indiana

Sunday: at Boston

Wednesday: at Boston

Friday: at Indiana

Sunday, April 21: at Indiana

x-Wednesday, April 24: at Boston

x-Friday, April 26: at Indiana

x-Sunday, April 28: at Boston

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Golden State vs. L.A. Clippers

Saturday: at Golden State

Monday: at Golden State

Thursday: at L.A. Clippers

Sunday: at L.A. Clippers

x-Wednesday, April 24: at Golden State

x-Friday, April 26: at L.A. Clippers

x-Sunday, April 28: at Golden State

Denver vs. San Antonio

Saturday: at Denver

Tuesday: at Denver

Thursday: at San Antonio

Saturday, April 20: at San Antonio

x-Tuesday, April 23: at Denver

x-Thursday, April 25: at San Antonio

x-Saturday, April 27: at Denver

Portland vs. Oklahoma City

Sunday: at Portland

Tuesday: at Portland

Friday: at Oklahoma City

Sunday, April 21: at Portland

x-Tuesday, April 23: at Portland

x-Thursday, April 25: at Oklahoma City

x-Saturday, April 27: at Portland

Houston vs. Utah

Sunday: at Houston

Wednesday: at Houston

Thursday: at Utah

Sunday: at Utah

x-Wednesday, April 24: at Houston

x-Friday, April 26: at Utah

x-Saturday, April 28: at Houston

Wade gets send-off from 'Banana Boat' crew

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Dwyane Wade had some superstar fans on hand for his final NBA game.

LeBron James, Chris Paul and Carmelo Anthony were all sitting outside in Brooklyn on Wednesday night to watch Miami's game against the Nets.

Wade punctuated his career with one last triple-double, finishing with 25 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists in a 113-94 loss to Brooklyn.

The four players are close friends and former teammates on the U.S. Olympic team. James, Wade, and Paul were famously photographed being towed on a 'banana boat' inflatable while on vacation together in 2015.

Wade went over to the corner where they were sitting and hugged each before starting his final game before retirement.

James told Fox Sports Southeast that it was important for them to be there because their friendship goes beyond basketball.

"CP played last night, we had our last regular-season game last night and Melo's right here in New York so we kind of made the plan, made the decision to come up here," James said. "Listen, we couldn't miss D-Wade's last game. This is the last time he's going to be on an NBA floor wearing that Miami Heat uniform, that No. 3, so



KATHY WILKENS/AP

From left, Carmelo Anthony, Miami Heat guard Dwyane Wade, Houston Rockets guard Chris Paul and Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James pose for a photograph on the court after Wade's final NBA game on Wednesday in New York.

we're happy to be here to support."

Afterward, Wade finished his season-long custom of exchanging jerseys with players by giving his to Anthony. Anthony was one of the people who persuaded Wade to return this season and enjoy a farewell tour, but then he didn't last long enough with the Houston Rockets to play against

Miami.

"I didn't get an opportunity to play against Melo this year and exchange jerseys with him," Wade said. "That was a missing piece out of this whole season, so everything I've worked out great for him being here, for me having an opportunity to give him my jersey."

SPORTS



Columbus' day

Blue Jackets rally, stun Lightning in Game 1 » **NHL playoffs, Page 59**

NBA

Game time

Playoff matchups
set after wild final day
of regular season » **Page 63**

Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo, left, and Houston's James Harden.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY SEAN VENABLE/Stars and Stripes

WR Robinette finally getting chance at NFL » Page 55

